Nyakyusa generally it is kinship groups, not villages, which eat 754
protective medicines with certain first-fruits.

Unlike many other cattle-keeping Bantu the Nyakyusa take 241
great pride in cultivation, men boasting about their strength in 192
hoeing, and praising those who are diligent. Significantly, the
vocabulary relating to bananas matches in richness that relating
to cattle: we recorded a dozen terms—and there were said to be
many more—for varieties of bananas and plantains, which are
distinguished by the form and flavour of the fruit, and thirteen
terms for types of cattle, distinguished by colour and markings.

Not only does success in cultivation carry prestige in itself, but 574
it provides the wherewithal for hospitality, on which status in a 241
Nyakyusa community turns. To be respected a man must entertain
his neighbours with food and millet-beer. Control of grain
and vegetables to do this depends upon his own effort in hoeing,
as well as upon having wives and sons to work with him. We have
seen how the laggard among the Kukwe believes that the
fertility of his gardens will be sapped by his neighbours being
ahead. There is thus considerable social pressure compelling both [626]
men and women to cultivate diligently. At the same time, however,
no individual should be too conspicuous. Each must keep
in step in cultivation with his neighbours; and though his fields
may be a little larger than the average, they must not be a great
deal larger. The area cultivated (visible crops and stubble) by
seven compound families on the Lake-shore plain in 1935 averaged
6·13 acres per family; which, divided by the number of
members in each family, gave rather over half an acre per head
(men, women, and children) or 1·3 acres per adult. The acreage
ranged from 1·99 to 0·61 per adult.[1]

Cultivation thus involves co-operation primarily within elementary 472
and compound families, but it also involves village co-operation, 241
in that neighbours hold land together, help one another
in some measure, and try to carry out each process simultaneously.

The pressure of neighbours still helps to keep laggards up to 241
the mark, and also to keep the most energetic from getting far
ahead. But the village control over cultivation is diminishing for,
as we have seen, the custom of keeping in step is no longer
strictly insisted upon even among the Kukwe, nor does it apply

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[1] Monthly report of the Agricultural Officer, Tukuyu District, July 1933. Figures supplied by the courtesy of the Agricultural Officer, Tukuyu, 1935.

829 *ukwangala* is only possible between contemporaries[3] they must
876 build with contemporaries. The value set on *ukwangala* is thus related to the age-village; male contemporaries build together, and the company of, and good fellowship with, his age-mates is what creates a man of wisdom and character. Such is the Nyakyusa view of society.

576 For conversation to flow merrily and discussion to be profound there must be *ifyakwangalela*—'the wherewithal for good fellow-
264 ship', that is, food and drink—and very great stress is laid on
572 sharing these. Men and boys are expected to eat regularly with age-mates. Traditionally, fathers and sons never ate or drank together—to do so was held to be incompatible with the respect due from son to father—and men sought the company of equals at meals. From the time a small boy begins to herd he is encouraged to bring home two or three friends to eat with him, and in turn he visits each of them. Since boys have no fields of their own until they marry, but co-operate in cultivation with their parents, it is to their own mothers they go for food, and parents are proud of a son bringing many friends. 'Perhaps', said Angombwike, 'a son will come with his friends and cut a huge bunch of bananas, and take thick milk and eat with them. When the father comes back his wives will tell him: "Your son has eaten all the thick milk and cut a banana bunch!" Then he will ask: "How many men were with my son?" "Six!" "Ah, he's a chief!" the old man
[861] will say, smiling proudly.' 'And formerly if a young man came home often alone to eat, his father would beat him, or even take a spear and wound him, and when people asked why he would say: "This great fool comes *alone* to my place, again and again." It is good to eat with friends, for boys to go round in groups of four or five.'

264 After marriage each man is cooked for by his own wife, but he
562 continues to eat with his friends, bringing them to his home or going to their's .The first wife to come to a young men's village
●574 is said to have a hard life. 'She has to draw water and cook for all the young men of the village—they come to drink, and to wash, and they beat her with a stick if she refuses them. No, the

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[3] *Ukwangala* is sometimes used with reference to relatives as well as to village-mates, as in the phrase '*atikwangala kanunu nabakamu bake*', meaning 'he is not on good terms with his relatives'; but in its fullest sense it can only be used with reference to contemporaries.

264 562 574 husband will not be angry; if he were, he would be mocked at: "Did not your father provide marriage-cattle for this woman for you that she might be the wife (*umkasi*) of us all!" Sometimes, when the woman is cooking, her husband's friends come and take food out of the pot before she has finished cooking. When she protests, saying it is not yet cooked, the men say: "It is your work to cook, ours to eat." Then when her husband comes she tells him that so and so, and so and so, have eaten the food and there is only water left in the pot. . . . But when her husband's friends begin to get married they say to their wives: "That woman is really our wife! Listen to her!" And she has honour among the other women, and when they go to fetch firewood she walks with nothing, another carries her axe and head-pad.' This account cannot be taken literally—the first wife in the village does not provide *all* the food for her husband's friends, who still eat at their mothers' homes, nor do they have any sexual rights over her though they call her 'wife', but she must serve them as far as she can.

571 264 578 Sometimes, we were told, men's eating groups last a lifetime, but often friends quarrel or move, and the group breaks up. 'Perhaps one eats at midday and does not summon his friend, but only calls him to the evening meal, then the other, who always calls his friend to the midday meal also, is angry, saying: "He grudges me food", and they separate. They just stop calling each other to eat. Or sometimes one tries to seduce his friend's wife, and on that account they separate.'

264 178 Eating with contemporaries is still considered right and proper by Nyakyusa men, and it is generally practised by pagans, but the old men say that youths are less ready to share food than formerly. 'This custom of eating together is dying.' Certainly in Christian villages the practice has declined markedly. Many unmarried Christians eat with their friends, but the majority of the married men eat at home alone. Out of eight married men living in Rungwe, for example, only two ate together regularly, and the most educated group, the clerks, are notorious in the district for their eating habits. 'People are much shocked at the clerks for eating food alone. They say they are proud.'

264 574 Apart from eating regularly with certain close friends, well-to-do pagan men are expected to entertain generously, inviting fellow villagers to drink beer, or to a 'dinner party'—an ample meal with delicious dishes, very carefully served—from time to

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time, and providing meat feasts at funerals and at the initiation 574
and marriage of daughters.

As it is proper for men to eat with their equals it is improper 264
for them to eat with their juniors, or with women. In the past 593
fathers and sons never ate or drank together. Nowadays they 178
sometimes do so, even though conservative pagans, especially if the fathers and sons have been working together. Three reasons are adduced for the change: first, the example of Europeans and Swahili; secondly, the fact that the country is at peace and it is safe for all the men to drink together, whereas formerly, when there was constant danger of attack, the young men were forbidden to drink at all; and thirdly the fact that young men earn money and buy beer for themselves which they may invite a 'father' to share (*vide* Document p. 194). When the Nyakyusa drink beer they replenish the pot repeatedly with boiling water, and men expect to have the water boiled for them by a woman. As Mwambuputa explained, 'Sometimes my son brings his pot (of beer) to my place and calls his friends saying: "We will take the pot to mother's house and she will pour in water for us." Then they come to my place, and they invite me to drink, and I accept, and we drink together. How can I grudge my son beer when I have some? Did he and his friends not entertain me?' The change turns on the fact that a young man can earn money and buy beer for himself while yet unmarried. Formerly no unmarried man commanded millet for brewing. Now, when he is drinking in his father's homestead he cannot but invite his father to join him.

Women commonly eat alone with their young children and un- 264
married daughters. Sometimes co-wives who are good friends 595
eat together, but they have no obligation to do so, and in a big homestead perhaps only two wives will eat together and each of the others eat alone. More usually a woman sends a dish of food to each co-wife to eat in her own hut. For a woman to eat food with a man is considered quite impossible. In those families in which men no longer ate with neighbours one or two ate with their young sons, but we heard of none who ate with their wives. The example of Europeans did not influence them to this extent.

It is admitted that women also enjoy company and profit from 264
it, and it is considered good that they should get on with their 462
fellows, but there is no suggestion that it is a woman's duty to 574

264 cultivate her mind by conversation, or to eat regularly in company. 462 In more formal hospitality there is the same difference; a woman never invites her friends to drink beer with her, or to a ● 574 'dinner party', as her husband must do if he is to have prestige with his neighbours. Women only share the ritual feasts at initiation and marriage, and at death.

585 764 574 There are local variations in Nyakyusa rituals, notably between the Kukwe and Nyakyusa proper. But everywhere there is an obligation to provide feasts at the funerals and marriages of dependants. When his wife or unmarried child dies, a man must kill cattle for his relatives and neighbours to feast at the burial,[1] while an heir provides a feast for his relatives, and the neighbours of the 'father' from whom he has inherited. At these feasts equal portions of meat are allotted to relatives and neighbours—or were so allotted until the rights of neighbours to meat at funerals were formally limited (vide infra, p. 93). An heir must also brew beer, or kill a bull, to feast the deceased's neighbours when he begins to cohabit with his widow, or moves the property from his village. At the initiation and marriage of a girl there is a series of feasts (five in Selya), the food for which is provided partly by the groom's family and partly by the bride's; and if, as is usual, the bride is still a virgin or has been deflowered by the groom himself, he must provide a bull in thanks for her virginity (*ugwaluho jabusungu*), which is killed to feast the neighbours and relatives of her parents. The carcass is divided into three portions, one for the immediate neighbours of her father (men), one for 'those relatives with whom the father is on good terms and exchanges cattle', and one for the 'mothers' of the bride. Women as well as men eat meat and other fine food at all the marriage and funeral feasts.

574 576 The third occasion on which a feast for the village neighbours is thought to be essential is when a man or woman has offended his (or her) neighbours, or the neighbours of a 'father'. Thus a woman who has shirked her duty of advising on the division of her brother's inheritance, and is disapproved of by her neighbours on this account, begs pardon of them over a brewing of beer (vide *infra*, pp. 107, 236); a son, having insulted his father's neighbours

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[1] For the circumstances under which other relatives must provide cattle for funeral feasts see Godfrey Wilson, 'Nyakyusa Conventions of Burial', *Bantu Studies*, Vol. XIII (1939), p. 18.

574 by insulting his father, begs pardon of them by bringing a bull which his father may eat with them; or a daughter-in-law, having 576 inadvertently caught sight of her father-in-law, brings beer for him to drink with his neighbours.

574 At all feasts food is allotted in terms of kinship and village affiliation, and this tends to enhance the solidarity of kin groups 264 and villages. For example, funeral meat is first divided between 764 relatives and non-relatives, and that allocated to non-relatives is subdivided by villages, each village headman present being given a share to divide between his people, men and women. When a relative of the chief has died, and the whole country has come to mourn, the chief allots a cow to each of his senior headmen, who then divide the carcasses between the villages in their respective halves of the chiefdom. The meat at a 'coming out' ceremony, and at the great feasts which were held after battle, was divided in the same way, and we saw a division of this kind when a senior headman who had been in exile was welcomed home (cf. pp. 273–4). Thus the right to share in a feast depends either on kinship with the provider, or on membership of a village.

574 The Christians' code of hospitality differs somewhat from that 184 of the pagans: the latter stress feeding *neighbours*, whether it be in the daily eating together, or at informal beer and dinner parties, or at ceremonies, while the Christians stress feeding strangers, quoting the text 'I was a stranger and ye took me in'[1] and the parable of the Good Samaritan.[2] The pagans jibe at the Christians for being inhospitable because (as the Christians themselves admit) they entertain their neighbours less than pagans do; the Christians point to their wider obligations, and the fact that they do feed and house visitors from a distance, especially fellow Christians gathering for Church festivals. The Christians are very conscious also of the difficulties of hospitality in a monogamous household, for a wife must not only do all the cooking for visitors (and many Nyakyusa dishes require considerable labour to prepare), but she must also help to grow the food. The pagan who can afford to entertain much has several wives who share the work between them, whereas a Christian, no matter how rich, cannot have more than one wife and remain a member of his Church—unless it be one of the two small independent

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[1] Matthew xxv. 35.
[2] Luke x. 29.

574 184 African churches which countenance polygyny. The difficulty is partially overcome in some well-to-do Christian families by hiring labour to work in their fields and to fetch water and wood, and by offering visitors coffee or tea, which are easily prepared, [182] in place of home-brewed beer; nevertheless the conflict between the value of hospitality (to which pagan and Christian alike subscribe, though they define it rather differently) and the value of monogamy, is often acute.

621 The mutual obligations of neighbours are not confined to feeding one another, for neighbours share with relatives the obligation of giving sympathy and assistance at the various crises in Nyakyusa life; the concept of *ukwangala* includes keeping on good terms with people by being sympathetic and obliging.

764 621 All the members of a village (except young children) are obliged to attend every burial of an adolescent or adult in that village; they go to mourn the death of a neighbour or condole with one who is burying a 'son', for if a man dies while his father (or father's full brother, or his own senior brother) is yet alive, he is often buried in his 'father's' homestead.[1] Where a youth or man is buried by his 'father', his fellow villagers must attend the funeral also, but boys and young men need not go to a funeral in their fathers' village unless it is a village-mate of their own who is being buried.

[754] Funerals are occasions for feasting and dancing, so the obligation 'to mourn one another' (*ukulilania*) does not press hardly, and the Nyakyusa feeling is that no one would fail to come unless he were a witch, and fearful lest his victim rise from the grave and denounce him. 'If a man does not go to his neighbour's burial then at once people say: "It was you who bewitched him. Why else do you not come to bury him?"' Failure to come is certain evidence that the truant is 'a harsh man who does not keep on good terms with people (*nkali, atikwangala kanunu nabandu*)'.

764 One neighbour, 'he who went about most with the dead man', is appointed by the headman of the village to help the relatives dig the grave, and village neighbours must also bring small gifts of food and firewood for the entertainment of the many guests.

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[1] A married man whose 'fathers' are dead, or do not choose to exercise their right to bury him, is buried at his own home, and a woman who has borne a child is buried at her husband's home.

Christians are only affected by the shocked astonishment of fellow 795
Christians, not by the disapproval of pagans, and the unit within 754
which 'the curse' is commonly spoken of as operating is the congregation.
In two of the cases we recorded (*vide* Document, 184
p. 209) it was suggested that illness was due to the anger of 626
neighbours, fellow Christians, over stinginess and greed, but in the other cases it was not village neighbours who were primarily concerned, but the Christian congregation, a group embracing members from many villages.

The type of behaviour believed to be punishable by 'the curse' of fellow Christians also differs somewhat from that thought to be
punished by 'the breath of men'. The virtue Christians emphasise [831]
most is chastity, and 'the curse' is often said to be a punishment for fornication or adultery. The other sin commonly spoken of as bringing down a curse is disobedience, or disrespectful behaviour to the minister (or priest) or elder of the congregation. Among pagans 'the breath of men' serves also to sanction sexual morals and to sustain respect for those in authority, but their sex
code is different. It is incest, or familiarity between father- and [835]
daughter-in-law, which they regard as really evil, not sex relations outside marriage. And they emphasize respect to senior relatives and fathers' neighbours rather than to the leaders of any wider group.

Christians lay much less stress on hospitality to neighbours
than pagans, and it is generally agreed that they eat alone more 795
than pagans would dare to do. As one Christian put it, a pagan 574
would *always* call his neighbours to share meat or beer when he 184
had it, but a Christian might eat a sheep, or a goat, or even a calf,
alone with his family. It is good, the Christians say, to call friends 577
to share a feast, but not an inescapable obligation. Nor do Christians regularly send the saddle and ribs of any animal they kill to the chief, as pagans do; 'for', they say, 'we do not fear "the breath of men".' But hospitality towards strangers is felt to be a condition of salvation. One informant explained that 'If a man is stingy towards his neighbours it does not matter; but if he is stingy towards a stranger from a distance, he might die from lack of food; and that would be the fault of the stingy one. Such a fault would prevent him from entering Heaven.' This statement points to the most striking difference between Christian and pagan morality—the range of moral obligations. A pagan's duties

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

795 are primarily to his kinsmen and fellow villagers, and secondarily
to fellow members of his chiefdom; beyond the chiefdom and
● 574 circle of kinsmen he had, traditionally, no obligations. The
184 Christian definition of 'neighbour' is a much wider one. It is
577 emphasized by the missionaries that the Christian Church is universal, and Nyakyusa Christians themselves are conscious of their unity with, and obligations to, members of other chiefdoms, other cultural groups, and other races. The new sanctions for behaviour operating within the Christian group—the emphasis on Christian duty; the hope of that 'peace which passeth all understanding' and of eternal life; and the fear of suspension or expulsion from the communion of the faithful, and of hell-fire[1]—all these apply to relations beyond, as well as within, the village, the chiefdom, and the circle of kin.

795 Two other points were mentioned by Christian informants
when discussing the differences between pagan and Christian
184 morality: they said that Christian children growing up were
577 liable to be 'proud' (*namatingo*) in their bearing and manner of greeting, because they do not fear 'the breath of men'; and also that Christian men were not afraid to ask many cattle for their daughters at marriage, again because they do not fear their neighbours' disapproval in the way pagans fear it. The implication is that there is less insistence upon conformity to a given code among Christians than among pagans; a greater tolerance of diversity of behaviour.

795 These differences between pagan and Christian dogma are
matched by differences between their ritual. There are no
788 Christian rituals in which the village as a group, distinct from
184 other groups, is concerned. The congregation—the group worshipping in one church—is drawn from many villages, and though devout Christians living in the same neighbourhood often gather for morning and evening prayer, such rituals never include a whole village. Even in a Christian village on mission land only a small proportion of the villagers attend daily prayer regularly. As we have seen, the members of a pagan village meet from time to time to warn off witches, or to bless a repentant wrong-doer (*vide supra*, pp. 101, 109 ff.), but since belief in witchcraft or in 'the curse' is not orthodox among Christians, there is no ritual con-

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[1] cf. Monica Hunter, 'An African Christian Morality', *Africa*, Vol. X (1937), p. 265–91.

them knocks on the wall when he has succeeded, and the officiant 765
raises the *akalala*, the trill of applause and triumph[1] which is also 763
the war-cry, and shakes a basket of seeds by the door shouting:
'Ours, ours, we marvel at the thing!' Until this ritual connection 587
the heir and the widows remain continent, and great importance is attached to the success of the heir in having intercourse with all the widows. Should a widow refuse the heir after touching the ash it is said that she will either die herself or cause any man she lies with to die of 'the ash'; but if she escapes before being smeared with ash then she is safe. The heir is also in danger if a widow should refuse him after he has touched the ash.

The morning after the ritual union the heir is formally summoned out of the hut by a man knocking on the door and crying: 'Come out, war has come (*Soka! ubwite bwisile*),' i.e. sexual intercourse has begun. He sits on a stool in the doorway of the hut and is greeted by the children of the deceased: 'Good morning, Father.'

iii. '*The gasping cough.*' Each of the inherited women goes off to 783
her own father's homestead with the filth (*indafu*) of intercourse 768
on her. She does not even wash her hands, and she takes with her 587
cooked bananas which she has smeared with her husband's semen and her own emission. This she buries in the banana grove in her father's homestead in which he prays to his ancestors. She takes meat to her father if an animal has been killed at the 'shaving of the sprouting hair'. The heir similarly goes to his father's homestead (or that of his father's heir) with cooked bananas to be buried in his father's sacred grove. Each wife drinks beer mixed with medicine with her father and other close relatives. From the
time when the heir sleeps with the widows until this ritual is per- [579] ●
formed, they cannot visit their parents nor can their children do so (though usually children come and go freely in the home of their mother's people) and, more particularly, a widow must not drink from her mother's cup, or eat with her, or sit over her fire, or touch her hand. It is believed that, if the ritual is neglected, those for whom it should have been performed will be seized with a racking cough (*ingotolo*) and diarrhoea. Even Christians, who eschew the other parts of the death ritual, often participate in the *ingotolo*.

When a woman has died she should be replaced by a sister or 587
brother's daughter, just as the dead man is by a brother or son, 834

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[1] The closest equivalent in our society is cheering, but the *akalala* is raised by women.

All the women present, and Mwaipopo himself, had shaved to-day. 845

We stayed forty minutes there and some of the food was eaten on the spot. The rest of the food, the pot of beer, and the ointment and rouge, we carried back with us to Mwakobela's. The beer was given to Mwakobela who drank it with eleven other men, his kinsmen and neighbours. The food and ointment and rouge went to the women.

26 July 1935

The women had intended to go and visit the maternal relatives (*abipuso*) of the mother of twins yesterday, but her 'father' (Mwaipopo) had sent a message to say: 'Do not come yet, they are all away, some in Mwandosia's country, others planting potatoes.' Mwakobela, asked about his own mother's relatives, replied: 'My own *abipuso* have all died, and even if they had not, it would be too far to go, for they lived in Kukwe country. I did not throw medicine into the grass for them, no, we never do. 845 574

'The doctor is coming soon to sprinkle the cattle, all our herd here, my cattle and my neighbours', with medicine.' There are two herd groups in the village. 845 783

28 July 1935 (Sunday)

v. *Treating the cattle*

We were called to Mwakobela's place. He told us:

> The doctor brought medicine last night, just before dark, and she said to me: 'Sprinkle the cattle yourself.' 'Perhaps it is taboo for me to do so?' I replied: 'No, not at all, you sprinkle them; I am going off to church to-morrow, to the catechumen's class.' Her elder sister is baptized already and she herself intends to be baptized. So I asked her: 'To whom shall we go for medicine then?' She replied: 'I am giving the medicine to my daughter, the wife of Mwakisisile, the son of Mwaihojo.'

When we arrived at about 1.15 p.m. Mwakobela's cattle and some others were standing round a smoky fire, as usual, during the midday hours.[1] The pot of medicine was steaming on another fire at a little distance. 'How do the cattle fall sick, if you do not treat them?' we asked. 'They purge continually. . . .'

Mwakobela's wife said: 'We should send to Mwampona and let his cattle be treated too.' Mwakobela (to us): 'Mwampona herds his cattle with Mwakikato, in a separate herd from ours;[2] she says they should come too; certainly when Mwampona had twins our

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[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, p. 34.

[2] op. cit., p. 56.

Life is never dull for the African. There are marriages 461
and funerals here as elsewhere; the former
always a joyous occasion, the latter not always or
necessarily the reverse. A walk through a populous
village will bring one upon net making, pot making,
basket or cloth weaving, and one may hear the sharp
tap-tap of the bark cloth worker, or, in an iron-working
district, the clang of the blacksmith's stone hammer,
beating out hoes or spears upon a rough stone anvil.
And many drive dullness away with beer. Sometimes 273
it is a small party. A few friends gather in a house, 517
and sit around a pot or two of beer provided by the
wife of the host. They drink to the strumming of
a *pango* or the beating of a small drum, for they like
to have music at their feasts, even when only a few
are gathered. But if it is a village feast, given by the
chief, it may go on all night with terrific noise, shouting,
singing, and drumming; and not always does the
feast end without fighting.

Sometimes the villagers receive visitors. The native 574
evangelist on his rounds is always hospitably welcomed. 651
The tax collector is not exactly welcomed—
who ever welcomes a tax collector?—but he is received
well enough, for his coming has at least this advantage,
that those who are ready to pay the sum demanded
will not have to go later and pay at the *boma* (magistrate's
office), which may be a long distance away.
Sometimes a native trader comes along, his packs 574
carried by attendants, for he never carries them himself,
even when beginning on a small scale. Visitors

574 of more importance are the magistrate and the missionary, whose coming is usually heralded afar, by the report that he is already in the district, and is now perhaps only a day's journey off, slowly making his way from village to village, and dealing with whatever matters require his attention as magistrate or missionary. His coming is a matter of importance, for he will have a number of men with him who will need food, by the sale of which the villagers hope to make a few honest pence; though abundance of food is often given freely as a token of welcome. As the great man approaches the village, all the younger people come out to meet him with shouts of welcome, and if he is travelling in a *machilla*, the men will take the pole from the bearers, and with tremendous noise enter the village and deposit him at the school or the chief's house.

182 561 578 And the sadder side? Sickness, epidemics, the perpetual fear of witchcraft and of evil dreams foreshadowing ill, theft with its ever-present possibility of accompanying murder, quarrels that will not heal, forced marriages, and all the hidden cruelty that so rarely comes to the surface. Most pathetic of all, perhaps, the feud between old and young; the young all for to-day and to-morrow, for the new ideas, the hope of progress; the old for yesterday with its stability and ordered life; the young going in crowds to church, the old going secretly, and no doubt sadly, to worship at the ancient shrines, guarding the approaches lest the levity of youth should desecrate the place of terror, and evil come upon all the land; the

781 breasts, sit on a tree near the house; if *mwanjala*, [525] little black and white birds of another species, hop about twittering; the approach of strangers is foretold. Hospitality to strangers is a primary virtue ● [574] among the Konde, and food is prepared at once; but it is not cooked until they actually arrive. To offer [576] them food already cooked, is to offer a cold welcome, and possibly to do an injury; for cold food must not be eaten by chiefs, nor by hunters, nor by doctors, for in all these cases the effect would be to destroy the power of the medicines by virtue of which they are assured of success in their various callings.

787 5. Omens having reference to food are numerous, and a few examples must suffice. If a fly goes into 262 one's mouth, it is a sure sign that the person will soon be eating flesh, a rare treat for the Konde, who seldom eat flesh, unless there is an occasion for it: a birth, a marriage, or a death. But the fly indicates none of these; the flesh hinted at is a pure gift with no kind of condition attached. The same good fortune is suggested if a child eats cinders from the fire-place. A leopard crying all night in the neighbourhood is giving information that some one has broken a food prohibition. New season's food has been eaten before the chief has laid an offering of the first-fruits of that particular food-stuff at the grave of his ancestors, and the dwellers in the underworld are angry at the insult offered them. The chief is informed of the crying of the leopard, and the diviner is called in to find the culprit.

781 There is a common grass called *ditika*, which in

vary in different circumstances. Millet and rice, the two most valuable 241
crops, belong to the man and are stored by him; so that the division of a 592
millet or rice garden into plots and their assignment to different wives is 421
rather a division of labour than of property. But of all other crops the
woman on whose plots they have grown is an effective owner. She
stores them herself in her own house and no other wife of her husband
can touch them; it is only with him that her rights are in any way shared.

The main use of the crops which the Nyakyusa grow is to provide 592
food for each separate household group. Next in importance is the 593
provision of food and beer for hospitality, and for the making of gifts both 574
in everyday life and on special ceremonial occasions. And, finally, there is [437]
the barter or sale of surplus crops to obtain salt, pots, clothes, cattle and
to pay tax. Each married woman, therefore, first uses her own crops
to feed her husband, her own children and herself. If she is the only wife
then she cooks for her husband every day, but, even if she is one of many,
she is yet careful to cook for him frequently, in order to keep his affection
and the various advantages which go with it.

When cooking for her husband she must, when necessary, prepare 593
sufficient for guests, for a man very often has friends and neighbours [574]
eating with him; and if he wishes to make a gift of cooked food, she cooks
it for him from her own store. To provide meals for him and his guests
and cooked food for gifts is an obligation which she normally fulfils quite
willingly, as we have hinted above; she may be fond of him; it is in any
case to her interest to play her part in the co-operative relationship which
binds them together and from which both alike benefit. He hoes for her
and builds her house, he gives her a share of the household milk, which
he himself controls, he sleeps with and is gentle to her; he has, without
the aid of any legal, moral or conventional sanctions, a great hold over
her, as she, on her side, has over him. But, if either fails to play their part
in willing co-operation, then there are, for both alike, these other sanctions
to fall back upon. A quarrel develops between them and leads to violence, [627]
perhaps he strikes her, perhaps she viciously repels him, one night, from
her bed; and then the immediately injured party appeals to the neighbours
for support. They discuss the matter, censure one or the other, and try
to make it up between them; if they fail to do so the case may go to
Court and one will then have to pay compensation to the other. Or it [626]
may happen, without any violent quarrel, without any formal appeal to the
neighbours, that one of them becomes aware that his conduct is provoking
their mockery and criticism; and then in shame he mends his ways.
Or, finally, one of them may fall sick and suspect that wrong-doing on his [754]
part has been followed by spiritual retribution in the form of witchcraft.

A woman, then, uses her stores of food to cook not only for herself

583 Normally a bachelor is given cows one by one, over a period of years, and, as we have seen, he sends them, as he receives them, to the father of the girl he wants to marry. One cow is sufficient for betrothal, but not until he has given three can he begin openly to sleep with her. And he cannot usually set up his own economy until he has given at least three cows and she has reached puberty and been initiated. He may of course bespeak an already grown girl, but if he engages himself to a young one he is expected to bring two or more bulls as well, during the course of her initiation.

684 If he chooses to spend his cows in adultery fines, he may, but he will then have to wait longer to get married.

582
561 Thus the system of marriage by a transfer of cattle is, in this society, directly linked with a late marriage age for young men and with a privileged position for older men. When a boy gets cattle he at once gives them to an older man in order to receive his daughter as a wife; the labour of every bachelor helps to increase his father's wealth in food; it is in general the older men alone who can afford more than one wife. And there is an average difference of ten years or more in the initial marriage age of men and girls. [165] The tax registers show in part of the district, among 3,000 adult* men, 34% bachelors, 37% monogamists, and 29% polygynists; and investigation proves that, generally speaking, it is the young men who are bachelors, the men over forty-five who are polygynists.

511
574 Though cattle are their most valued form of wealth, it is on agriculture that the economy of the Nyakyusa is primarily based. Meat and milk are luxuries, and daily bread comes from the fields. Hard work in a fertile country provides food for each family, and the millet beer which is the ordinary material of hospitality. Hospitality brings a man prestige and authority among his fellows; on the possession of sufficient food largely depends the contentment of his wives. And in the production, preparation and eating of food the relationships of the family and of the individual family within it, are clearly visible.

241
512 Hoeing is the work of men, planting, weeding, reaping and cooking is the work of women. The men, young and old, hoe for about four hours on most mornings of the year; in the lower altitudes they begin well before sunrise and finish about 9 a.m., on the upland plateau they begin later and continue till noon or beyond. The energetic ones sometimes hoe again for an hour or two in the late afternoon. Different

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*Presumed to be 18 years or over.

Ana. 622

every year two hereditary Kinga priests come a three days journey from 782
their own country to participate in the sacrifice of a black cow to the [776]
spirits of Lwembe and his descendants.

Down by Lake Nyasa, in the extreme South East of the Nyakyusa 778
district, there is another equally sacred spot where sacrifices were, and I 764
believe still are[21] made to Kyala, a younger brother of Lwembe.

The Christians and the Moslems form other religious groups which 795
transcend the boundaries of a single chiefdom, but an examination of the Nyakyusa Christian and Moslem communities is beyond the scope of this paper.

The political group which is constituted by a Court district, though 636
only ten years old, is of great importance in Nyakyusa society; but here again the detailed examination of its organization and the relationships of its members is beyond the scope of this paper.

Conclusion: Culture and Society

The aim of sociology is to describe single forms of society fully and, 121
in comparison with one another, to explain them completely, in so far as 129
reasons can be found within this particular scientific field. Neither full description nor complete explanation of Nyakyusa society has here been attempted: many important facts have been omitted from the account, irregularities of detail have been slurred over, the connections of fact have been only occasionally and sketchily established, and no systematic comparison of this unit with others has been made at all.

But the method of this paper has involved an analysis, summary and 121
general though it has been, of the nature of some of the many institutions in which the Nyakyusa meet, of some of the actual elements in their relationships with one another. It is in their dealings with the earth and their cattle, with the spirits and with men who break the law, in their discussions and arguments, their ceremonial feasts, their giving and receiving, in their loves and hates and in their admiration and mockery of one another that they forever make and remake their own human relationships.

Culture is the matter of which society is the form; inseparable in fact they are only intelligible together. No two men can be related unless they both do something and unless their activities are somehow connected. Nor can either escape relationship with his fellow if what

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[21] I have not yet been there to investigate.

641 symbol of potency,[5] and we suggest that this also is an element
672 the ritual of the 'coming out', for the fertility of the childless
792 thought to be bound up with the virility of the chief.

[372] There are a number of stories about the way in which Mw
kyusa (98) surpassed his brothers and one of them tells how ea
brother made fire and set alight the pasture land (for traditiona
parts of the pasture land were fired each season to provide fre
grass for grazing in the early spring), and the fires started by t
elder brothers soon died out, but that started by Mwakyu
'burned for a whole month'. This is interpreted as an omen of h
greatness as a chief: fire, potency, lordship are inextricably linke

At the 'coming out' all things are made new. No matter h
[561] crowded the country the young men must move to new sites a
the shelters in which they live must be new, though, as will
[936] shown, they do not necessarily move to *unoccupied* country. O
their new site the young men live as bachelors, milking th
cows and cooking for themselves on their new fires the meat of t
cattle they seize, the bananas and grain brought by their wi
and mothers. Meat is abundant, for the young chief now ru
and has the right to take what cattle he chooses, even from t
villages of the old men in his country. 'It was as if there were w
[726] the young men seized cattle, food, and women', and though th
did not fight their fathers directly, as the Meru did, they clea
asserted their power. And, as so common further south, t
accession of a chief was the occasion for raiding the neighbou
[778] the young men, we were told, went forthwith to test the efficacy
the magic spears and the medicines with which their chief a
headmen had been treated. Or the chiefs might lead a battue
clear the country of wild pig, as Mwakatumbula (Mwambete 1
did directly after his 'coming out'. Well fed and exuberant, t
[574] young men dance and display their cattle, and entertain visit
lavishly, for every chief seeks to attract men to his country
his hospitality.

Then they set up the sign and memorial of the chieftainsh
[824] they plant cuttings of two species[6] of *ficus*, *indola* which is mu
used as a shade tree, and *umpandapanda* from which bark-cloth
[423] made. Close to these the first house of the chief and that of
senior village headmen are built, and the trees also mark t

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[5] Monica Wilson, *Rituals of Kinship*, pp. 104, 143.

[6] When writing *Good Company* I mistakenly thought that two cuttings of the sa
species were planted. Cf. *Good Company*, p. 27.

773 among some other peoples with a corresponding ritual), but the young men seize cattle belonging to the older generation, thus asserting their authority. The opposition of generations is taken for granted and given expression in constitutional form: the ritual is a celebration not of 'rebellion' but of growth. For all their reluctance to hand over power the fathers 'rejoice and are glad because their sons have grown up'. Change in the structure of society after the revolution of the heroic age, is not celebrated, and is scarcely admitted, but the process of growth, of death and procreation, is expressed in every ritual. Indeed, the ritual cycle is like a fugue with the theme of death and rebirth constantly recurring.

771 The pagan universe is just and orderly. There is a nemesis
772 attached to spilling blood or binding a man with ropes. The anger of men,[1] or of the shades who are roused by men, is what brings
812 most misfortune, and often, the Nyakyusa think, such anger is justified. Even medicines may be selective, injuring only the guilty. The good man who celebrates the proper rituals, fulfils his kinship obligations, and keeps on good terms with his neighbours, is protected, while the evil-doer falls ill. But some evil men, witches and sorcerers, attack the innocent out of jealousy and spite. Evil to the Nyakyusa, lies primarily within men: it is 'anger in the heart' which materializes as pythons that throttle others.
[578] Because they are aware of angry impulses in themselves the Nyakyusa find it difficult to believe that any society without witchcraft can exist; to say that there is no *ubulosi* is like suggesting that there is no ill will or anger in a community. And since anger brings misfortune there is an obligation on those whose anger might have caused sickness or ill luck to express goodwill by spitting or blowing out water, and saying, 'May the patient recover' or 'I am without anger'. Among commoners the man required to show goodwill is usually a senior relative, rather than a suspected witch (as among the Azande). But a neighbour or
● [574] friend who might be a witch or sorcerer should also express goodwill when he visits the sick, and fellow hunters who have ill luck may stop to declare their goodwill to one another, as we have seen. If a chief or priest-chief is sick the village headmen and priests must wish him well and confess any anger they have felt towards
[793] him. The blowing out of water is a symbol of confession, 'bringing

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[1] For a full account of the belief in witchcraft and the 'breath of men', cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 91-121, 198-261.

x797 her by his anger, others that the husband was to blame for x795 rejecting medical treatment earlier on. The girl herself was reported to have said to her mother-in-law, when she was lying 754 ill at the doctor's house: 'Are you angry with me and has your anger caused the trouble? Perhaps I did not help you in collecting firewood?' But her mother-in-law replied: 'No, I am not angry with you at all.' And the girl continued: 'I know that my father is angry. Someone might go and ask him to pray for me.' There was also tension with the husband's pagan father who had protested that his son was praying for the death of his own children when he prayed with his Pentecostal friends that God's will be done. 'The Pentecostal people say: "I like to die. I don't take any medicine . . . if someone dies or not it is all the same thing." '

x797 Nevertheless, it is true to say that the field in which natural x795 causation is accepted is much wider among Christians than among pagans. It expands very slowly, but the change is evident. Even two cases of 'madness' (*ukubopa ikigili*), invariably the [828] symptom of the wrath of the gods in pagan thought, were interpreted to us by a Christian teacher in terms of grief and shock. The first was of a young man whose wife and grandmother (who lived with him) both died very suddenly, and whose only cow was taken by other relatives and killed for the funeral feast. The loss of the cow following the loss of his wife and grandmother was held to have shattered him finally—'the lineage was finished'. The other case was of a mother, devoted to her daughter, who was [591] distraught when the daughter went off to a distance, accompanying her husband to his place of work. For a daughter to marry [574] beyond easy visiting distance was traditionally inconceivable.

The vagaries of the weather, attributed by the pagans to the x797 neglect of sacrifices or quarrels between chiefs and priests, are x795 explained in scientific terms by some Christians. Heavy rain fell around Rungwe in October 1937 and prevented people burning 821 their rubbish heaps to fertilize their millet gardens. The pagans 132 insisted that such early rain was unheard of and kept asking each other what could have caused it. A Christian elder assured us that the early rain was *not* very unusual in the hill country; he had seen other seasons like it. And in January of the same year the people of Mwaipopo's country were 'astonished' because no heavy rain had fallen and young maize and millet were shrivelling in the ground. They said: 'It has rained all round' and 'it seems as if we had offended Kyala'. Kasitile went to divine (*vide supra*, p. 119).

when we went to a field I saw a stick of a special type upright in the 241
soil. It was made of a reed split at the top, with a small bundle of 784
leaves squeezed in the split. A piece of bark stood out from this bundle.
I asked the chief for the significance of this and he explained that it
was an *ulusingo*, i. e. a tabu sign to prevent anyone from stepping on
the field which was an *imasibi* (yam-field). This sign was believed to
possess "magical power", to strike an invader with illness. Each owner
of a field has the right to protect his field in such a manner, and a chief
especially has the right to command tabus regarding plants which are
staple food for the whole chieftainship, as, for instance, maize that is
not allowed to be reaped before the chief has given his permission. All
such tabus are also named *mwiko*[32]. During the time of such a general [574]
tabu, visitors, who by chance come through a village under tabu, are
not allowed to greet the inhabitants of the village or to speak to them.

The chief added that special watchmen are installed during these 241
periods; these men are dressed in a terrifying manner, and have the 688
right to arrest any person transgressing the tabu. The chief may punish 784
the offenders immediately, imposing on them, for instance, a cow as
a fine. This was also the case with an ordinary theft in a field, but
nowadays such affairs are regulated by the law of the Mandated [178]
Government. After the repeal of such a general tabu by the chief, beer
will be drunk (e. g. *ubwalwa bwa kutagila bwa kutondelo,* the beer
that is poured out at the harvest), and the usual eating community of [264]
men will be re-established, for Nyakyusa men like to eat together as
comrades, not in families.

10. When I was in Katumba, dances were held on several days from 535
the afternoon till midnight, very similar in form to that which Mackenzie describes (p. 160) by the name *Ikimbimbi*.

The men stood on one side of the open place in several lines, with sticks in their hands; on the opposite side were the women and girls. Between them, more in the background, were the drummers, at the beginning of the dance; then they moved round the place. The principal drummer was a man of great excitability. He performed most extravagant movements with his body and his drumstick, making somersaults, jumping over the drum, treating it as a "living being", running to it and turning just in front of it.

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[32] This word *mwiko* (forbidden) has the same wide (profane and ritual) meanings as *tapu* or *tabu* in the Polynesian Languages (cf. *Rud. Lehmann:* Die polynesischen Tabu-Sitten. Staatl. Forschungsinstitut für Völkerkunde I, 10; Leipzig 1930).

262 The tender leaves of pumpkins and taro plants *(amasimbi*, leaves of taro), as well as of a number of other plants growing wild *(indeke)* are also used as vegetables. This food is called *iseke*, a word denoting all sorts of green vegetables.

In his treatise on "The Land Rights of Individuals among the Nyaky-
usa" (The Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. 1; 1938, p. 43). G. Wilson
points out that the fruit of the so — called *unsyunguti* — tree is "both
[278] delicious to eat and also full of seeds which are dried and crushed for
ointment *(inyemba)*", but he adds that he had been unable to find out
the botanical name of this useful tree. Perhaps the following passage
in the article of Dr. Kerr Cross ("Notes on the Country Lying between
Lakes Nyasa and Tanganyika"; Proc. Roy. Geogr. Inst. N.S.Vol. XIII,
1891, p. 98) may be helpful in this connection: "There is a tree of the
314 sycamore family which grows extensively all over the north of the
[262] lake called mwisyungute by the natives which might be developed.
[386] It is a most picturesque tree which produces a food, an oil, and a dye.
The oil or fat, when cool, is solid, even at a tolerably high temperature,
and is like beeswax. It burns well as a night-light, and with wax might
[388] be made into candles. In a rude way I have made candles of it. It might
also make an excellent soap."

273 As an adjunct to these foods curdy milk *(ulukama ulukafu)* is very
[272] much esteemed[2], to say nothing of the various types of beer, mostly
prepared from millet for the men. Large fields of millet are, therefore,
to be seen everywhere in the land of the Nyakyusa. On one occasion I
attended a beer drink in the hut of a chief. The conduct of the natives
present, the chief and his advisers *(amafumu)*, was in every respect
praise-worthy. Pleasant and interesting stories were narrated. Not
●[574] infrequently the invitation of a commoner who has had some differen-
ces with his chief or one of the *amafumu* to such a feast is regarded
as a gesture of reconciliation.

243 As in the time of Sir H. H. Johnston so also to-day "all the oozy-meadows are planted with rice." A traveller coming from the hilly region to the north on nearing Lake Nyasa is struck by numerous large fields of rice in the plain at the northern end of the lake.

178 *11. Crafts.* Mackenzie (1925) is certainly justified in complains of the decay of the arts and crafts among the Nyakyusa. The Indian and European influence is to be seen everywhere in the deterioration and final dissolution of these branches of the ancient culture of the Nyaky-

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[2] A. Wilson, Introduction, p. 256.

177 for the local investment of savings are the most important
[474] economic undertaking in the District. The seven coffee co-
operatives handled a crop of 950 tons in 1955, worth about
[454] £427,500, and are organized so efficiently as to be able to return
over 90 per cent of the price of the coffee on Moshi market to the
producer, after the heavy transport costs (14 per cent) have been
paid. One Government-paid officer assists these societies.

In the educational and recreational field also, associations are
526 emerging: football clubs; companies of Scouts and Guides;
● 575 'Welfare Centres' with classes in reading for adult illiterates,
177 indoor games, and Saturday-night dances; Women's Clubs for
handwork and recreation; and in Tukuyu itself an inter-racial
club with its own premises, whose members meet to play games,
and get to know one another and discuss common problems. These
associations make a visible mark on the face of the country in the
shape of new brick Churches, co-operative stores, football fields,
and, more rarely, a village club-house.

177 The change from a subsistence to a money economy, and from a
system of government through chiefs and village headmen who
651 were dependent primarily on inherited wealth, which secured to
them the labour of many able-bodied wives and sons, to a system
of government through European officials, chiefs, and clerks paid
out of taxes, and assisted by unpaid village headmen, implies the
collection and administration of taxes. The District Council has
177 the responsibility for the budgeting and expenditure of over
£60,000 per annum. The greater part of it is spent on the salaries
652 of chiefs, secretaries, and clerks engaged in administration, on
courts, on schools, dispensaries, and roads. The development of
associations with paid officers also implies the collection of dues
and budgeting. As in so many countries the difficulty of building
177 up a tradition of honesty in administration is great. Tax clerks,
685 court clerks, council secretaries, and co-operative society secre-
taries, and even church elders handle sums of money relatively
large in proportion to their earnings and one of the tasks of
European officials and missionaries is to secure a sound system of
accounting and check corruption. In the traditional society stock
theft was a capital offence, but money has not the sanctity of
cattle, and often the clerk who has appropriated public funds is
treated by others as 'unfortunate' rather than immoral. At the
same time villagers show great anxiety lest a man entrusted with
some common fund should spend it for himself. The risk of theft

through each group of full brothers, until, when the last full 595
brother is dead, and the son of the eldest is an adult, the family 428
stock comes to him. Thus few men under forty (other than chiefs)
have more than one wife. Of 3,000 tax-payers (presumed to be
18 years and over) in Selya, 34 per cent were bachelors, 37 per
cent monogamists, and 29 per cent polygynists. Plural marriages 595
breed wealth, for the polygynist is likely to command the labour 556
of many sons as well as several wives, and in due course he expects to receive the marriage cattle of many daughters.

Social status turns primarily on age, sex, and the control and 554
distribution of wealth. As we have seen, the position of a chief is 428
hereditary, but kinship with a chief does not carry office, nor are
the kinsmen of chiefs conspicuously wealthy. Every man in turn
hopes to control the property attaching to the house into which
he was born, and all who live long enough do so. But there is a
delayed right of primogeniture, for the senior son of a senior
son inherits the bulk of the family stock when it passes to his
generation, and the eldest of each group of full brothers has a
special claim to the cattle coming in from the marriages of his
sisters.

Seniority, whether within the context of the lineage, or of the 554
hierarchy of age-villages, is something respected in itself, but 556
wealth carries authority and prestige only in so far as it is used
generously, in hospitality: one man is great and distinguished
(*nsisya*) because he feeds people, another of little account because
he is poor or mean.

Women occupy a position very subordinate to men in Nyak- 562
yusa society. They play no part in public life, except in so far as [593]
the two great wives of a chief, and the first wife of a village headman co-operate with their husbands in rituals; and in the relationship of husband and wife, as well as in that of father and
daughter, a woman is expected to show obedience and respect.
Her deference is expressed conventionally in her crouching to [576]
greet men (*vide* Plate IX), and in her use of the submissive *taa*
('Yes, my lord') when addressed by them. Having no great chiefs
and little regard for rank, Nyakyusa men show no trace of subservience in their manner to each other, but they expect a meek
compliance from all women. The only relationships with a male in
which a woman may in some measure assert herself are those
which she has with a brother, and with a brother's sons. Leader-

medicines of power for the first time, and these are thought to create or develop in them *amanga*, that is, the power of seeing and fighting witches (*vide infra*, pp. 96-102). To the senior headman of each young chief is handed a magic horn to attract people to the country. 'The horn is the luck of the chief that many people may come to build.' To each is given also a magic tail, which, it is believed, will enable him to dream of wars that are approaching and which, together with a magic spear, he carries into battle. 'The spear of the chieftainship is to fight battles with, it is manhood, strength.' The horn, the tail, and the spear are emblems of office handed on by the senior village headman of the old chief to the senior headmen of the young chiefs. They were treated periodically by a special doctor and a set was provided for each independent chiefdom at the coming out. The treatment of these emblems is now rarely undertaken—we were fortunate to see it once. The Nyakyusa say that since the country has been pacified, it has become unnecessary; its purpose was to secure success in war. 622 789 643

The next stage in the action is the one from which the whole institution takes its name: 'the coming out' (*ubusoka*). The two young chiefs are secluded for a few hours in the hut of the old chief's first wife, where they receive various forms of magical treatment, and when this is finished someone outside knocks at the door and cries 'Come out!' Then, to quote the words of a village headman who told us about his own 'coming out', 'The director of ceremonies said: "Get up!" The chiefs got up and came out (*basokile*)[1] of the house to us, and we, the crowd of young men, cried "Come on!" and welcomed them. Then we all ran shouting and calling the war cry towards the next chiefdom. In the old days we should have invaded that country to take cattle and to bring them back and eat them at the new huts which we build next. But that is finished now.' The senior headmen of the new chiefdom lead the charge, each grasping his war tail, his 622 643

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[1] cf. the traditional Nyakyusa greeting (now archaic) '*Sokile!*' literally meaning 'You have come out (of the house)' i.e. 'Good morning!' This greeting was not confined to those who had been through the *ubusoka* ceremony. [576]

A comparison of the meaning of the root in other Bantu languages is again suggestive. In Xhosa *ukusoka* means 'to install circumcised lads into manhood by giving them presents when they come out from their seclusion and are publicly acknowledged as men by the assembly of men' (Kropf, *A Kaffir English Dictionary*); *ubusoka* means bachelorhood, celibacy (of a circumcised man, not a boy). [192]

gardens will be small.' And the crops of one who lags behind, 241 when his fellows have planted together, are also said to suffer. For this reason, if one woman is delayed and unable to work along with them, her friends will plant a corner of her field when they plant their own, so that the fertility of her fields may not be lost.

An educated informant explained that 'those who have learnt agriculture may think that late planting is unsuccessful because it is not the right season—the weather is wrong—but others think the failure is due to not planting at the same time as their neighbours.' Christians living on mission land, with their gardens in a block by themselves, do not trouble about planting simultaneously, but many of those living in mixed villages with fields adjoining the fields of pagans conform 'because if they do not plant with them they do not have pleasant social relations'. In some chiefdoms, however, the custom is dying even among pagans. In Porokoto's country we were told: 'The custom is now dead, men just burn higgledy piggledy. A fire blazes up somewhere. We ask, "Whose is it?" "So and so's" comes the reply. "Oh! All right!" The custom has died because the Christians are many and the chiefs have turned to the Christians; their hearts are with the Christians even though they themselves are not baptized, and about this burning of the rubbish heaps for millet they say: "What is it for? Does it avail anything?" '

Among the people of Selya the rule was traditionally less 241
elaborate than among the Kukwe. It is polite and customary for 576
those whose fields adjoin to call one another so that they may begin each process together. 'We speak to each other saying: "Friends, let us hoe a millet field over there, all of us, hunger comes on us." ' And if a son hoes a field next to his father's his 'mothers' call their daughter-in-law to plant with them, since their fields adjoin. But the only sanctions for keeping in step in hoeing and planting are conventional; there is no suggestion that the laggard's crops will fail. If, however, a man *burns* his millet field before his neighbours have heaped their weeds, they have ground for complaint. They say: 'Why have you harmed our crops?'

Underlying the emphasis on neighbours cultivating simul- 241
taneously is the idea that the fertility of fields and crops in ear 754
can be stolen by witchcraft and sorcery, and that if one man's

829 876 *ukwangala* is only possible between contemporaries[1] they must build with contemporaries. The value set on *ukwangala* is thus related to the age-village; male contemporaries build together, and the company of, and good fellowship with, his age-mates is what creates a man of wisdom and character. Such is the Nyakyusa view of society.

576 264 572 For conversation to flow merrily and discussion to be profound there must be *ifyakwangalela*—'the wherewithal for good fellowship', that is, food and drink—and very great stress is laid on sharing these. Men and boys are expected to eat regularly with age-mates. Traditionally, fathers and sons never ate or drank together—to do so was held to be incompatible with the respect due from son to father—and men sought the company of equals at meals. From the time a small boy begins to herd he is encouraged to bring home two or three friends to eat with him, and in turn he visits each of them. Since boys have no fields of their own until they marry, but co-operate in cultivation with their parents, it is to their own mothers they go for food, and parents are proud of a son bringing many friends. 'Perhaps', said Angombwike, 'a son will come with his friends and cut a huge bunch of bananas, and take thick milk and eat with them. When the father comes back his wives will tell him: "Your son has eaten all the thick milk and cut a banana bunch!" Then he will ask: "How many men were with my son?" "Six!" "Ah, he's a chief!" the old man [861] will say, smiling proudly.' 'And formerly if a young man came home often alone to eat, his father would beat him, or even take a spear and wound him, and when people asked why he would say: "This great fool comes *alone* to my place, again and again." It is good to eat with friends, for boys to go round in groups of four or five.'

264 562 574 After marriage each man is cooked for by his own wife, but he continues to eat with his friends, bringing them to his home or going to their's .The first wife to come to a young men's village is said to have a hard life. 'She has to draw water and cook for all the young men of the village—they come to drink, and to wash, and they beat her with a stick if she refuses them. No, the

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[1] *Ukwangala* is sometimes used with reference to relatives as well as to village-mates, as in the phrase '*atikwangala kanunu nabakamu bake*', meaning 'he is not on good terms with his relatives'; but in its fullest sense it can only be used with reference to contemporaries.

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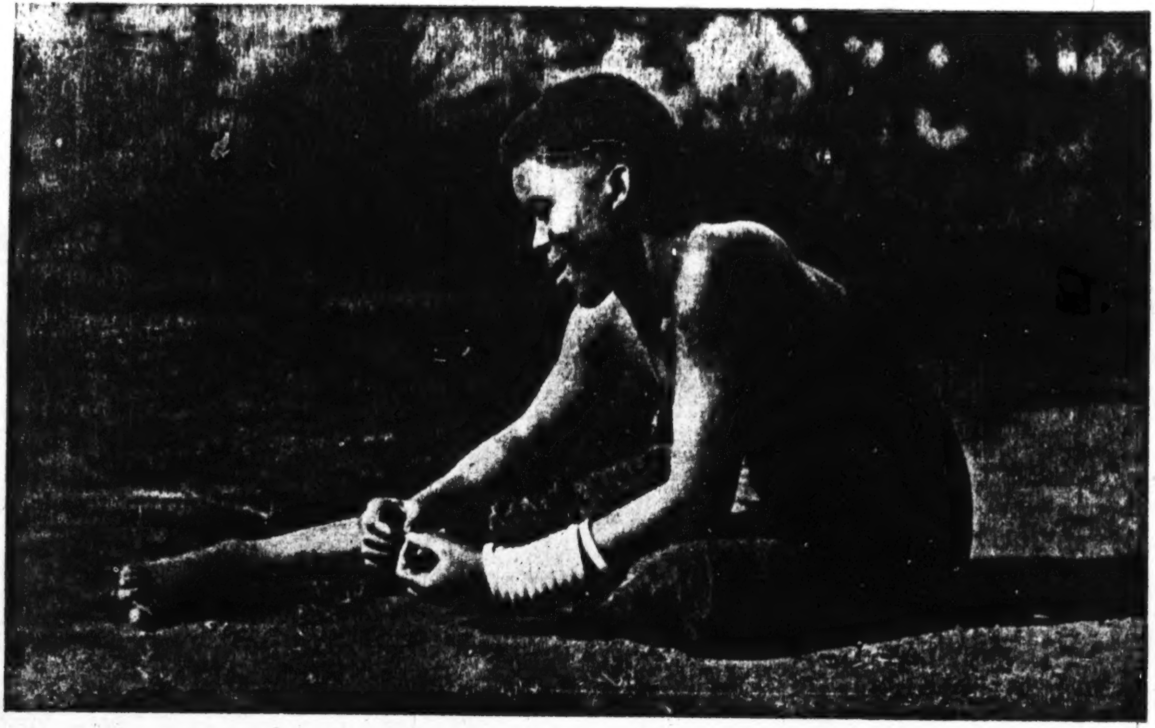
[Facing p.70]



IX. NDIMBOMI, A CHRISTIAN WOMAN, STOOPING TO GREET A MAN

264 cultivate her mind by conversation, or to eat regularly in company.
462 In more formal hospitality there is the same difference; a
woman never invites her friends to drink beer with her, or to a
574 'dinner party', as her husband must do if he is to have prestige with his neighbours. Women only share the ritual feasts at initiation and marriage, and at death.

There are local variations in Nyakyusa rituals, notably between
585 the Kukwe and Nyakyusa proper. But everywhere there is an
764 obligation to provide feasts at the funerals and marriages of dependants.
574 When his wife or unmarried child dies, a man must kill cattle for his relatives and neighbours to feast at the burial,[1] while an heir provides a feast for his relatives, and the neighbours of the 'father' from whom he has inherited. At these feasts equal portions of meat are allotted to relatives and neighbours—or were so allotted until the rights of neighbours to meat at funerals were formally limited (*vide infra*, p. 93). An heir must also brew beer, or kill a bull, to feast the deceased's neighbours when he begins to cohabit with his widow, or moves the property from his village. At the initiation and marriage of a girl there is a series of feasts (five in Selya), the food for which is provided partly by the groom's family and partly by the bride's; and if, as is usual, the bride is still a virgin or has been deflowered by the groom himself, he must provide a bull in thanks for her virginity (*engambako jabusungu*), which is killed to feast the neighbours and relatives of her parents. The carcass is divided into three portions, one for the immediate neighbours of her father (men), one for 'those relatives with whom the father is on good terms and exchanges cattle', and one for the 'mothers' of the bride. Women as well as men eat meat and other fine food at all the marriage and funeral feasts.

574 The third occasion on which a feast for the village neighbours
is thought to be essential is when a man or woman has offended
•576 his (or her) neighbours, or the neighbours of a 'father'. Thus a woman who has shirked her duty of advising on the division of her brother's inheritance, and is disapproved of by her neighbours on this account, begs pardon of them over a brewing of beer (*vide infra*, pp. 107, 236); a son, having insulted his father's neighbours

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[1] For the circumstances under which other relatives must provide cattle for funeral feasts see Godfrey Wilson, 'Nyakyusa Conventions of Burial', *Bantu Studies*, Vol. XIII (1939), p. 18.

574 by insulting his father, begs pardon of them by bringing a bull
which his father may eat with them; or a daughter-in-law, having
●576 inadvertently caught sight of her father-in-law, brings beer for
him to drink with his neighbours.

574 At all feasts food is allotted in terms of kinship and village
affiliation, and this tends to enhance the solidarity of kin groups
264 and villages. For example, funeral meat is first divided between
764 relatives and non-relatives, and that allocated to non-relatives is
subdivided by villages, each village headman present being given a share to divide between his people, men and women. When a relative of the chief has died, and the whole country has come to mourn, the chief allots a cow to each of his senior headmen, who then divide the carcasses between the villages in their respective halves of the chiefdom. The meat at a 'coming out' ceremony, and at the great feasts which were held after battle, was divided in the same way, and we saw a division of this kind when a senior headman who had been in exile was welcomed home (cf. pp. 273–4). Thus the right to share in a feast depends either on kinship with the provider, or on membership of a village.

574 The Christians' code of hospitality differs somewhat from that
184 of the pagans: the latter stress feeding *neighbours*, whether it be in
the daily eating together, or at informal beer and dinner parties, or at ceremonies, while the Christians stress feeding strangers, quoting the text 'I was a stranger and ye took me in'[1] and the parable of the Good Samaritan.[2] The pagans jibe at the Christians for being inhospitable because (as the Christians themselves admit) they entertain their neighbours less than pagans do; the Christians point to their wider obligations, and the fact that they do feed and house visitors from a distance, especially fellow Christians gathering for Church festivals. The Christians are very conscious also of the difficulties of hospitality in a monogamous household, for a wife must not only do all the cooking for visitors (and many Nyakyusa dishes require considerable labour to prepare), but she must also help to grow the food. The pagan who can afford to entertain much has several wives who share the work between them, whereas a Christian, no matter how rich, cannot have more than one wife and remain a member of his Church—unless it be one of the two small independent

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[1] Matthew xxv. 35.
[2] Luke x. 29.

poraries, the men of the village. They are forbidden to enter her 881
hut, and if she catches sight of one outside she turns away from 621
him and shields her face with a mat. And at the end of the seclusion
each 'village father', as well as her own father, must make
her a small gift, before she will greet him. The co-wives and some
of the village neighbours of the bride's mother form the group of
'mothers' who treat and instruct the bride, help to provide food
for the feasts, and finally take her to her husband. Not all the 881
village neighbours are expected to cook for the marriage feasts of
a commoner's daughter, only immediate neighbours and special 621
friends (together with relatives) who have been asked to do so; 576 ●
but if an immediate neighbour is not invited to help he will feel
affronted. Twijulege explained that 'If the owner of the homestead
overlooks someone who has built close to him, and does
not say to him, "They are coming to bring the marriage-cattle for
your child, please help us to cook", then that friend will be angry,
and will think to himself, "Perhaps we are not on good terms
(*tutikwangala kanunu*) though I had always thought we were",
and he will say to the father of the bride: "Why did you not tell
me that they were coming to bring the marriage-cattle for your
child that I might help you with the food? I was startled by the
rejoicing." ' An old man who had only called one friend, besides
relatives and the 'best man', to help cook at the marriage of his
daughter, was stigmatized as 'a surly fellow who does not care
about being on good terms with people'.

The groom, on his part, is supported by his village-mates, who 585
come in a crowd driving the marriage-cattle, and dancing the 621
stamping marriage dance (*ukukanya nganya*). His mother, who 535
has a share in the ritual and brings gifts of food, follows him,
accompanied by some of her co-wives and village neighbours.

Village solidarity is thus exhibited at ceremonies, not only in 621
the allocation of food, but by the manner in which village contemporaries
of the same sex rally to each other's help, dance
together and, if need be, fight together.

Besides offering sympathy and help when their fellow is in 621
need, it is the duty of neighbours to give him advice, and persuade 572
him to act wisely. If, for example, a man has delayed very
long in providing marriage-cattle for his son, his neighbours take
the son's part, and try to persuade him to give the cattle. 'Perhaps',
said one informant, 'the son may elope with a girl, and

● 576 In Nyakyusa society it is senior relatives who formally blow
754 out water to express their good will, not suspected witches, as
among the Azande. But the admission of anger by the supposed witch or justly shocked neighbours, and their wishes for the patient's good health, are anxiously sought (*vide infra*, p. 101), for such good wishes are thought to lead directly to his recovery.

754 The reverse of this emphasis on the value of confessing anger is the belief that the man who nurses a grudge in secret without ever admitting it is the most dangerous enemy, whether he be a senior relative muttering to the shades, or a neighbour using witchcraft, or a rival who has turned to sorcery. Mwambuputa, a conservative village headman without any school education, was very explicit on the point: 'The root of witchcraft is this—when two people have a quarrel in their hearts and do not let it out. Maybe I have a neighbour who hates me, but he never lets it out, he says nothing and we seem to be on friendly terms—these are the quarrels that are pregnant with witchcraft. But if he lets it out and tells me that I have wronged him in some way then the quarrel has no menace in it. It is when he lets nothing out and stays silent, though angry in his heart, that he comes in dreams to throttle me. That is the root of witchcraft.' Hence the insistence on one accused of witchcraft admitting guilt (*vide* infra, p. 112).

754 'The defenders' are powerful, but it is believed that witches
are occasionally able in dreams to get past them, and throttle
791 men against whom they have a grudge, or their cows. ' "The defenders" do not go out in dreams to fight the aggressors every night. A witch wanting to throttle a man comes night after night.' 'Nowadays it is much worse than it used to be, since the Europeans prevent us reporting them, and getting them stopped; "the defenders" work hard, but some nights they sleep without dreaming and the witches get past.'

Although the primary function of 'the defenders' is to see and
754 drive off witches, nevertheless they are also thought to use their
791 power to punish a wrong-doer. In doing so they are assisted by
the witches, but, the Nyakyusa argue, the village headman who
626 leads this night attack in dreams is no more breaking the law than he is when he fines a thief in court. In both cases he is exerting power to maintain the law. The Nyakyusa have a lively fear of shocking their neighbours, for it is held that the shocked astonish-

754 626 between the legal and illegal use of power derived from pythons. 'The breath of men' is the general public opinion of a whole group—of an age-village or chiefdom—acting through the 'python power' of those of its members who happen to be possessed of it, led by one or more village headmen and directed against a single person. On the other hand, individuals proved to be witches are those believed to have acted by themselves, either against the public opinion of their age-village or chiefdom, or at any rate without securing its support. No pagan Nyakyusa doubts that witchcraft is bad, or that 'the breath of men' is used to bring legitimate punishment on evil-doers, but the classification of particular cases varies somewhat with the point of view of the individual. The victim of 'the breath of men' may speak indignantly about the attacks of 'the witches'.[1]

791 576 'The defenders' are regarded as pillars of society, and their exercise of python power as right and proper, yet no one readily admits to the possession of such power; it is a proud and boastful thing to do, and not good manners. Informants, when discussing it, rarely spoke as if they had direct knowledge of the power, usually prefacing their remarks with: 'It is said that', or 'I hear that'. This was true even of village headmen who are all believed to have the power. One such man, to whom a direct question was put, replied: 'I would not go so far as to boast of it myself, but other people in my village have it.' In villages of mature and old men, others besides the headmen are often known by name as having it; and besides this there is the general belief that in each such age-village 'some people', not specified, have it as well.

iv. Witchcraft, 'the breath of men' and morality

754 [626] Now the power of witchcraft and 'the breath of men' is held to operate primarily within one age-village, and it is denied that it can ever extend beyond the chiefdom. 'How could the people of another chiefdom "eat" a man?' said the village headman, Mwafula, 'It is those *here*'. The typical accusations are against neighbours and wives or co-wives and, nowadays, against fellow workers living in the same camp (cf. table, p. 198). The fact that it is within the village that witchcraft is thought to operate is

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[1] cf. Godfrey Wilson, 'An African Morality' in *Africa*, Vol. IX (1936), pp. 87–8, for such a case.

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Nyakyusa pagan society from its quality in England. The word *ukulila* in other contexts means to cry, weep, or complain aloud; at burial it is used to refer specifically to the wailing, and by extension to the whole of the ritual. The quality of Nyakyusa mourning is both more openly terrified and grief-stricken and also more lively than in England. And these two qualities of fearful grief and vivacity are very closely connected.

That some at least of those who attend a Nyakyusa burial are moved by grief it is easy to establish. We have heard people talking regretfully in ordinary conversation of a man's death; we have seen a man whose sister had just died walk over alone towards her grave and weep quietly by himself without any parade of grief; and we have heard of a man killing himself because of his grief for a dead son. But, even among the chief mourners, they are not all grieved: 'There are some men', said an old woman, 'who have no sorrow when their wives die. J., when his wife died, was quite unmoved; and some women are not much upset when they lose their husbands. L. was not when her husband died; perhaps she was thinking of marrying again, for she was quite young. But old women are always grieved for they cannot marry again.'

Whatever their private feelings may be, however, the chief mourners and other relatives are obliged for very shame to show [576] signs of grief. The chief women mourners, as we have seen, may not dance; the more distant women relatives may not adorn themselves; and all the chief mourners, both men and women, are expected to weep and shed tears. We have seen an old man weeping at his half-brother's burial, although the two had, notoriously, been on very bad terms and had hardly spoken to each other for years. And all relatives, however distant, who come to a burial are expected to greet the chief mourners sympathetically. Very many non-relatives do so too, but they may omit the greeting without offence, if there is a great crowd present.

We have plenty of evidence that the grief at death is largely mixed with fear. It is, indeed, probable that the fear of death (fear of their own future death, fear of the shades, fear of the contagion of the corpse) touches some people at a burial more deeply than grief. Be this as it may, it is clear that the mourning is, for some, an expression of real fears. And it is the relatives, above all, who are afraid. Neither contagious diseases nor subsequent affliction by the shades, nor the vague contagion of the corpse concern any non-relatives, except those who dig the grave and bury the dead

One by one the villagers emerge from the houses and
sit in the sun, greeting neighbours with a polite 572
"Have you slept well?" if there are any neighbours [576] ●
near. Then the husband milks the cattle, and the boys come to drive them out to the pasture, where they will remain until the early afternoon, when they are again milked.

Generally the cattle sleep in the same house as their 231
owners, tied up to stakes fixed deep in the floor; but 592
where there are grown-up sons not yet married, a separate house is built in which the parents sleep with the little ones, while the young men guard the cattle from raiding thieves.

The bed is frequently no more than a mat spread 513
on the mud floor, with a single blanket for covering, and no pillow, unless it is a piece of roughly trimmed wood. The more prosperous natives, earning good pay in the employment of Europeans, have well-made beds fully equipped, in many cases even with mosquito nets hung from the roof. The poorer consider that they have made a great step forward if they have been able to save up enough money to buy a single blanket, and not seldom even that belongs to the father, the mother and children having to be content with meagre coverings of calico or grass mats. But [354]
the house is warm, often too warm, for the fire is always burning, the door is closed, there are no windows, and there is no ventilation in the roof; and all the inmates sleep with their feet to the fire, which is in the middle of the floor.

Here and there one will come upon rows of tiny 342
houses, each built and occupied by two or three small 561

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512 sheer hard work makes men and women look thin and haggard. Work stops about noon; the women go home to attend to the food, the men to see to the cattle which the smaller boys have been looking after during the day. The milking is always done by the men; it is not women's work as with us. If there are flies about, and there usually are, the cows need no invitation to thrust their heads into the column of acrid smoke that arises from a dung fire, kindled for the purpose. The rest of the afternoon is filled either with small duties, basket mending, net work, some slight repairs to a canoe, rope making, house repairing; or it may be there is a lawsuit to be settled, and every idler will make a point of being present.

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[576] By the time food is over, night has closed in. If the night is dark, one after another slips away with a friendly "May you sleep well," and silence reigns until morning. Unless it is suddenly broken by the roar of a lion or the growl of a leopard; and then the young men, who sleep with the cattle, rush out with spears and clubs and wild shouting to drive off the intruder, while the others raise a weird cry within the houses. Should the lion take refuge in a thicket and refuse to be driven off, a small party may slip round to the nearest white man, if he is not too far away, to beg him either to lend them a rifle, or to come himself to their aid. In the warm moonlight nights, however, other noises fill the ear. The young people gather for a dance, and the drum fills the night air with its interminable tum tum tum, now soft and

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allowed to escape; it has *ifingira*, the most powerful 784
of all drugs, and is divided between the chief and the great doctors, who alone may cut up a lion's carcase. Another very powerful drug is *ilibobwe*, which, if cast into a doctor's house, destroys the virtue of all his medicines; and if carried through a garden will wither up all crops; it is therefore *mwiko* to possess it unless one is a doctor.

The code of manners includes prohibitions against 576
speaking with the mouth full in the presence of elders; the elders will curse the offender with dire results; against spitting, for sorcerers only are great enough to dare, and one may be accused of sorcery. If a great man is passing, one must sit right down on the ground to salute him; to sit on a chair or any kind of seat is grossly bad manners, and is *mwiko;* it is followed by the unspoken but unfailing curse. Nakedness, even among the unclothed Konde, is a serious offence; at the least a small apron of leaves must be worn, for sorcerers go naked at night, and a charge may lie against anyone found unclad. If a stranger, notwithstanding the prohibition against it, asks for food, it must not be refused: how do you know that he is not a friend of Kabeta, who will send lions to punish you for churlishness! A woman must [264]
not eat while the males of her family are eating; if she does, her husband will talk to her presently. When on a journey, the young men must go first to face the dangers of the road; it is *mwiko* for the elders or chiefs to be in front. If two companies meet, they must not mix; each keeps its own side of

576 the road, and all spears must be lowered from the "ready" position, as must axes or other weapons. It is *mwiko* to attend to one's personal comfort in a public place.

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184 The prohibitions connected with women are very numerous, and only a selection is given. A pregnant woman may not go near food in any condition, growing, being threshed, or being cooked; nor may she go near beer that is being prepared. If she goes out of the house, she must not turn back in the doorway; the ancestors are there; she must go right out, and if she needs to go in again, she must do it from a pace or so from the door. The penalty is the death of the child she is carrying. An interesting prohibition is that against going behind anyone, and it applies specially though not exclusively to women. The incised medicine of the person behind whom she passes loses its virtue; but the evil may be averted by the person turning round to face her. A woman must not sweep rubbish out of the house; she must lift it out; to sweep it out is to scatter her husband's wealth.

595 The younger wife must not begin sowing or planting until the elder has begun; she must not sleep at night nearer the fire than the elder; she must carry loads for the elder wife, and be generally in a subordinate position. There is no reluctance on the part of the first wife to see her husband taking others; the more he has the greater is her position. A singular prohibition is that which forbids a man to take his widowed mother home to care for her; he must care

606 how unwittingly, is one of the gravest of misfortunes. "He will never die," say some; but this apparently startling fate means no more than he will fall into one sickness after another, and finally will die in a weak and undesirable old age. Others believe in a different kind of ill-luck. The man will be accursed, and will be unable to stand upright, but will be obliged to crawl on his buttocks all his life, scourged by an evil spirit which dwells in him. If the daughter-in-law [576] sees her husband's father, she has merely committed a breach of good manners, and suffers no evil in consequence.

were killed by a tree, who were killed in war, by lightning, by lion or leopard, I call you all to come; and whosoever has been forgotten, let him come. I pray to you all, let my dog be well, let him lie down in peace. He is the saliva of God. O God, be merciful, and turn back the disease." 782

The beer that he brought and laid on the ground before him, is now poured into the palms of little children, who drink it in that way. If a flesh offering is also made, it is laid down in small pieces, and each ancestor is named as his portion is laid down. When ants come out to feast on it, it is known that the spirits have accepted the offering, and all present run away lest the spirits should work evil upon them.

Little children are affectionately referred to as dogs, especially when they commit a fault, which the father apologizes for. "How can you be angry with the little one? He has no more sense of what is fitting than a dog." But to call a person a dog in any other connection is a great insult, and must be atoned for. Spitting on a person is another insult, but when done ceremonially, it is believed to have great virtue, and is no doubt connected with the idea of the "Spittle of God" referred to above. 576

If the sick person does not recover, the fault is not in the system. Some mistake has been made, the diviner is unskilful, his wife is "unclean," or some other cause prevents the expected result from following; for, when the proper ceremonies have been performed, the patient recovers. But a final cause of failure is always kept in hand; it is the will of God 761

787 breasts, sit on a tree near the house; if *mwanjala*, [825] little black and white birds of another species, hop about twittering; the approach of strangers is foretold. [574] Hospitality to strangers is a primary virtue among the Konde, and food is prepared at once; but it is not cooked until they actually arrive. To offer [576] them food already cooked, is to offer a cold welcome, and possibly to do an injury; for cold food must not be eaten by chiefs, nor by hunters, nor by doctors, for in all these cases the effect would be to destroy the power of the medicines by virtue of which they are assured of success in their various callings.

787 262 5. Omens having reference to food are numerous, and a few examples must suffice. If a fly goes into one's mouth, it is a sure sign that the person will soon be eating flesh, a rare treat for the Konde, who seldom eat flesh, unless there is an occasion for it: a birth, a marriage, or a death. But the fly indicates none of these; the flesh hinted at is a pure gift with no kind of condition attached. The same good fortune is suggested if a child eats cinders from the fire-place. A leopard crying all night in the neighbourhood is giving information that some one has broken a food prohibition. New season's food has been eaten before the chief has laid an offering of the first-fruits of that particular food-stuff at the grave of his ancestors, and the dwellers in the underworld are angry at the insult offered them. The chief is informed of the crying of the leopard, and the diviner is called in to find the culprit.

781 There is a common grass called *ditika*, which in

Burier of men !—Great Father ! Great Father !—O Mpeta ![1]—Great 643
Father ! Great Father !—O Kiposa[1]—Great Father ! Great Father !—
O Kyabala ![1]—Great Father ! Great Father !—O Striker and Stabber ! 644
—Great Father ! Great Father !—O Mwenende ![2]—Great Father !
Great Father !—O Mpolombasambo ![2]—Great Father ! Great Father !
—Dweller in the hot sun !—Great Father ! Great Father !—O Fish-eater ! O Banana-eater !—Great Father ! Great Father ! ' " The general form of this praise-song was identical with that of the prayers in the sacred groves and so it is literally true to say that the nobles of Ngonde worshipped the living Kyungus.

But the majority of their subjects only worshipped from afar in fear and trembling. At Mbande no ordinary commoner was ever conducted into the sacred enclosure but only the territorial nobles and the elder chiefs, and they only occasionally ; while when the Kyungu travelled through his country all men save the very oldest fled from his approach : " In former times we commoners never looked on the face of the Kyungu, we feared him far too much. When he journeyed through Ngonde we all used to flee from him, men, women and children ; only the very oldest stayed to watch him as he came ; and they would fall down and clap their hands in grateful worship."

Even in speech fearful circumlocutions were used to refer to his journeying—" The country is on the move "—" The great hill is moving "—" The mystery is coming." While it was taboo both for the old men who then stayed to see him and for those who entered the sacred enclosure, ever to greet him in the usual way. Falling down and clapping the hands was the only greeting for the Kyungu, never the ordinary " how-do-you-do ? " From the nobles and great chiefs men did not flee ; but the great chiefs, at least, were greeted by falling down and handclapping, not in the ordinary way. [195] [576]

From the wives of the Kyungu also men fled in terror, fearing lest they be compromised and thrown over the cliff, and this both added to the atmosphere of terror which surrounded him and was an expression of it.

On the other hand the various gifts of the Kyungu to his subjects 643
were, in their ceremonial aspect, an expression of personal relationship to 602
them, of paternal interest in them ; and so also the tribute which they
brought to him was, in its ceremonial aspect, an expression of filial [431]
respect. As in all primitive groups personal rather than impersonal relationships were dominant in the old Ngonde. The Kyungu was

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[1] Names of early Kyungus.

[2] Archic words which I do not understand.

to which all had led up.) Then Mwaipopo (116) spoke: 'We have taken 783
home Mwakanjoki (60), we have taken home Mwakisambwe (30).' 782
And the others agreed: 'We have taken him, we have taken him.'
Mwaipopo went on to speak of the tree cutting: 'It was always a [688]
swept place, Mwakanjoki (60) built there, let it be a swept place
again, let it be clear, let our prayers go beneath to enter the house
here [i.e. no matter that the trees have been pruned], prayers go
beneath in the swept place. See, we buried our father Mwaijonga (82) [778]
in the swept place, was it heavy? [i.e. a sacred grove] No, a tree grew
later. So if I like I cut that it may be clear again.' To which Kasitile
replied: 'Thank you, Mwakagile' (116, identified with his grandfather
59). Mwaipopo continued: 'Let no one whisper. Who whispered?
Where do we all look? Here! It is our earth, here, it is our tree, here,
it is our fertility of the soil (*mboto*), here. No one stirred up Mwakisambwe (30); he stirred up himself.'

So they prepared to go, saying, 'It's getting dark, it's getting dark.' But Kasitile stopped them. 'Wait, there is one thing left, tell Mwakagile (116, identified with his grandfather 59) that he should seek a cow, let us finish.' They took this up: 'Yes, since we have taken your grandfather to his home, let us go to your father, Mwaijonga (82), and to Mwakabule (117), let us finish them.'

Mwaipopo ignored this. 'It's getting dark, let us go.' And Kasitile softened it by addressing Njobakosa and his fellows: 'But Njobakosa have you cattle?' 'Yes!'

'And has Kissogota got some?'

'Yes.'

'Well, then, is it you who will seek this cow?'

'No!'

'Indeed, it hurts Mwakagile' (116, identified with his grandfather 59) [i.e. it hurts him to have to spend his cows].

'Do not "cut leaves at home" [i.e. summon a crowd and discuss the [576]
matter publicly], he will be startled, he will swear at us, speak with
him privately.'

So they went off. Jane (wife of Kasitile, 86) took the breast of beef to Mwaipopo's (116) place. One leg went to the priests, Njobakosa, Ngulyo, and Kissogota, one to Mwamakunda and Ndisu (Kasitile's kinsman), and another kinsman who was not present, the hump and neck were sent to me; and two legs and the chine were kept for Kasitile himself and his female relatives.

A couple of weeks later, when Kasitile came to visit, he explained one or two points in the ritual. Asked about Mwamakunda's forceful words 'Why do you shut up words in the heart?' and the reply of Kissogota and Njobakosa, he said: 'That is very important. Mwamakunda is my man, he stands by me, he eats meat with me, he compelled

[P.138]

Notes on the daily life of the Nyakyusa (Tanganyika Territory)

Cf. Sociologus 1951, I, 1 S. 53 ff.

By F. Rudolf Lehmann

192 576 *1. Greetings.* The first thing to strike a visitor to the Nyakyusa country north of Lake Nyasa on passing through one of the numerous picturesque villages surrounded by banana groves is the way of greeting customary among these people. "*Ukuponya*" is the Nyakyusa word for "to greet". In the morning you are greeted with the exclamation: "*ugonile* (pl. *mugonile)*", which literally means: "Did you sleep well?" And you may answer in the same way, or, in fuller form as you can hear it from the mouth of the natives: "*ae'e ndaga, ugonile*", or "*ugonile yoyoque*". "*ae'e ndaga*" may be used with all answers, meaning: thanks! At noon or in the afternoon you will hear: "*uvombide*", you have worked, or, have you worked? Then, according to the case, you may answer: "*muvombide avanda*", you, men, have worked, or, generally: "*mwangere*", which is equivalent to the Swahili: "*habari gani?*". If you greet a person in the evening with the words: "*ugonege*", may you sleep well, the person thus addressed will answer: "*kagone!*".

234 [512] *2. Milking.* The first task in the daily life of the Nyakyusa people is for the men to milk the cows. This is done in the morning before the cattle are driven out to graze and again in the evening when they return. But the cattle are also driven back to the village at noon when [237 232] they are usually fumigated standing in the smoke of a fire for which cow dung and banana leaves are used, a process designed to remove vermin from the skin of the cattle. The animals seem to be very fond of this procedure. They stand quietly in the smoke gazing at the passers-by.

241 [462] *3. Hoeing.* "Hoeing is the work of men, planting weeding, reaping is the work of women. The men, young and old, hoe for about four hours on most mornings of the year; in the lower altitudes they begin well before sunrise and finish about 9 a. m., on the upland plateau they

b. Dignity

Though the Nyakyusa lay so much stress on geniality, and 156 praise a man for being 'a good mixer', yet they greatly admire 577 dignity (*ubusisya*). To be *nsisya* (dignified, impressive) is one of ● the attributes of chiefs and village headmen, sought, as we have seen, through medicines; but ordinary men may also aspire to it in their persons and homesteads. Indeed, *ubusisysa bwa nkaja*, the dignity of the homestead, is one of the legitimate channels of ambition to a Nyakyusa, and is something achieved largely through hard work.

Two styles of huts are traditional—one round, with the wall 341 slanting outwards towards the top, and a conical roof; the other 577 rectangular with perpendicular walls, a pitched roof, and curving gables (cf. Plates X and XI). For a homestead to be dignified 515 the huts must be built of good bamboos, and the space between them packed with oval-shaped mud bricks, carefully worked in patterns. Special pains are taken with the ends of long huts (*ifibaga*) to get a good curve on the roof pole, and a pleasing design of bricks and criss-cross binding on the gable (cf. Plate XI). Inside, the walls are plastered smooth, and house-proud women mould a pattern in the mud with their fingers, which runs round the wall like a frieze. A long hut, showing that the owner has many cattle and young wives to house, adds dignity, but the homestead of a relatively poor man may be *nsisya* if the huts are well built, the open space between them weeded and swept, and the bananas pruned and heavy with fruit; while a shabby long hut and a dirty court are never dignified, no matter how rich the owner. The insistence on cleanliness both within the huts and 577 in the court is very marked;[1] men themselves weed and sweep 515 regularly around their homesteads, and their young sons must help them. The Nyakyusa jibe at their neighbours for being dirty in person, in cooking, and in their homesteads: indeed the dirty habits of the women is given as a main reason for not intermarrying with the Kinga or Poroto; and a Christian confided in

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[1] Thomson, Kerr-Cross, and Lugard were all greatly impressed by Nyakyusa cleanliness; Thomson, op. cit., p. 271; Kerr-Cross, 'Geographical Notes on the Country between Lakes Nyassa, Rukwa, and Tanganyika', *The Scottish Geographical Magazine*, Vol. VI (1890), p. 283; Lugard, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 131.

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us that it was a great effort to her to accept food from the Poroto when she went on preaching tours, because their huts and pots were so dirty.

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Trees are felt to add to the dignity of a homestead as well as throwing a grateful shade; the beautiful *umwali* trees have long been valued for this purpose, and to-day exotics are much sought after. For example, the old chief Mwaipopo, noticing a fine cypress when he visited us at Isumba (a cottage that had once been a German mission hospital) inquired whether there were not some seedlings under the tree. He himself carefully dug up one and took it away to plant in his 'capital'. Some Nyakyusa even *steal* trees to adorn their homesteads. It is said that jacarandas planted out in an avenue at Tukuyu disappeared within a very short time.

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The attributes of dignity in the homestead are changing perceptibly. Well-built huts in the old style, a long *ikibaga*, a well-swept court, fruitful bananas, and fine *umwali* trees are mentioned by the old men; but many of the younger ones prefer hip-roofed houses (a style introduced by Europeans and known, appropriately enough, as 'the partridge') with windows and door of European pattern, beds of flowers, roses, fine coffee and exotic trees. Yet they keep the court well swept; for lawns have not become fashionable.

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A fine presence, a well-kept homestead rich in cattle and bananas and shaded with stately trees, are in themselves impressive, but the possessor of them only reaches his full dignity when he acts as host, and uses his fine food and fine home for lavish hospitality. Wealth and an impressive manner, without urbanity and hospitality, may well lead to accusations of witchcraft.

c. *Display*

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Feasts provide opportunity for swaggering parades and dances in which the Nyakyusa delight to display themselves and their possessions; they are the great occasions for *ukumoga*, that is, display in approved forms. Dancing, exhibiting a beautiful body with only a narrow bark-cloth belt to hide it, showing off physical strength and the aggressiveness of a warrior, parading orna-

156 was a fierce man in war, and always quarrelling with and spearing 593 his fellows, he would say with pride: "He is my son!" And if he heard people saying: "The son of so and so is a fierce man", he would rejoice. And if the son wished to marry young his father would refuse him cows, saying: "Swagger first."' That truculence (*ubukali*) is a form of swaggering for men, is still evident in the funeral dance, when men charge up and down with spears, displaying their strength, and take umbrage at the slightest thing [582] (*vide infra*, p. 151). And marriage was deliberately delayed partly because a bachelor was thought to be a fiercer warrior than a married man.

● 577 182 This admiration of truculence, as shown in the funeral dance, reveals a contradiction in Nyakyusa values. On the one hand urbanity and good temper are praised—they are intrinsic to *ukwangala*—on the other truculence. Is the opposition one between old and new values, or is the contradiction itself traditional? It is obvious that a readiness to fight was a quality valuable to the village in the days of inter-village warfare, and the Nyakyusa tell of murderers and even thieves being reprieved just because they were so useful in war. 'We did not drive away violent men (*abagasi*) in the old days; we said: "They will fight along with us in the future" '; whereas since the pacification of the country, quarrelsome men have become nothing but a liability, likely to get their fellows and their chief into trouble with the Administration. The Christian emphasis, also, is all on the virtue of peaceableness. There has probably been some change in values with the disappearance of war from the villages, but we think that a certain contradiction always existed: swaggering young men were admired, and children were warned not to be quarrelsome (*nkali*) towards their fellows, lest they be accused of practising witchcraft, or rouse the anger of a witch. The contradiction is not, of course, peculiar to Nyakyusa society, and it may be resolved by defining the groups within which fighting is excluded, and those in which it is approved. Most Nyakyusa would hold that in the old days quarrelsomeness within the village was bad, that towards members of another village of the same chiefdom it was allowable, and towards members of another chiefdom it was good. In the wider society of to-day the same distinctions are apparent: the war dance at funerals is limited lest it lead to fighting between villages (*vide infra*, p. 151) but admiring audiences watch their friends in the detachment of the King's African Rifles at bayonet drill in Masoko.[1] 577 182

Display is felt to be particularly appropriate to young people, and bachelors were held to be the fiercest warriors, but neither dancing nor fighting was confined to young men. The chief Mwaipopo (Plate V) was famous as a skilful and ardent dancer when over seventy, and the leader in war was the senior headman of the country, who, if not already married when he took office, had to marry almost immediately, since his wife shared in the ritual of establishing his house. Furthermore the villages of married men of the ruling generation fought, as well as the villages of their bachelor brothers and sons. 156

That the Nyakyusa had some skill in warfare is certain, for they defeated and drove off Ngoni raiders and warriors of the Sangu chief Merere,[2] but they never developed a military kingdom like that of the Bemba to the west, or the Hehe to the east, nor did they raid at large like the Masai and Ngoni. Their geographical position sheltered them very considerably from outside attack, and discouraged raiding abroad. They confined themselves mostly to lifting the cattle of neighbouring chiefdoms. 721

Cattle, whether they be spoils of war or inherited wealth, are displayed. Not only does a long byre add to the dignity of a homestead, but, when there is some ceremony at the home of a rich man, he shows off his herd by driving it round and round the homestead. At other times his sons gallop it along the village street, the iron bells with which the animals are adorned ringing merrily. Nyakyusa smiths make cow-bells in sets,[3] to chime in harmony, and the aim of a rich man is to own a set of bells which ring a full chime, and a herd large enough to carry them. Nowadays those who own bicycles display them in the same sort of way, riding round and round the homestead at a ceremony, and ringing the bells madly. 231 556 [326]

Unlike the enjoyment of good company (*ukwangala*), display 156

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[1] This detachment was not supposed to include Nyakyusa who were recruited for a detachment stationed outside the district, but in fact Nyakyusa got in by posing as men from Ngonde, Nyasaland.

[2] D. Kerr-Cross, 'Crater-lakes north of Lake Nyasa', *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. V (1895), p. 119–20; Lugard, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 56, speaks of the Nyakyusa as 'brave in war'.

[3] We deposited a set in the Livingstone Memorial Museum, Livingstone, N. Rhodesia.

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ance among Nyakyusa Christians, and the tendency for fathers 795
and sons to build fairly close to one another. 177

The forms of display approved among Christians are also changing with the change in the sex code. The nakedness of the Nyakyusa shocked the missionaries, and it is insisted that Christian women, as well as men, should wear at least one cloth; also many of the traditional dances and songs are felt by the Nyakyusa converts themselves to be incompatible with the profession of Christianity, consequently at funerals and weddings there is often a group of Christians dancing quite separately from pagans, and singing their own song, which, more often than not, is a hymn. A wedding dance to a hymn does not appear incongruous to Nyakyusa, as it does to European observers.

e. Wisdom

There is a very close connection between the values we have cited, and all save one are coherent with one another. The enjoyment of good company implies observance of the rules of decency; *ukwangala* is between equals, not between parents and children; it merges into neighbourliness, for one who does not help, or seek help from, a neighbour is unfriendly (*atikwangala kanunu*); and it is dependent upon that generous hospitality which is one of the manifestations of dignity (*ubusisya*). 182

The one value which is not wholly coherent with the others is the value of display (*ukumoga*). Certain forms of display are compatible with urbanity and friendliness between neighbours, but the swaggering truculence of the warrior is not—it is liable to breed quarrels between fellow villagers, as well as with outsiders; and display also ceases to be compatible with other values when it involves adultery. The friends of a woman who has eloped with [837] a lover may greet her with the phrase: '*Ndaga, umogile*!' which literally translated means 'Thank you, you have displayed yourself', and implies, 'Congratulations! Had a good time?' But no Nyakyusa would maintain that to commit adultery was, in general, good.

The all-embracing virtue to the Nyakyusa is wisdom (*amahala*). 577 It includes the enjoyment of company and the practice of hospitality, for no man is wise who is surly, or aloof, or stingy; it includes neighbourly behaviour, dignity, and respect for law and

577 convention, but it does not include display. The wise may dance, but they do not need to dance in order to be wise, and those who commit adultery, or are boastful, or quarrelsome show foolishness (*ubukonyofu*) and sinful pride (*amatingo*), the opposite of wisdom. Wisdom is expressed in all relationships, not only in village relationships, but it is *learned* in the village; pagan Nyakyusa insist that 'it is by conversing with our friends that we gain wisdom'.

795 577 The Christian view is somewhat different. Urbanity, neighbourliness, hospitality, and dignity are components of wisdom for a Christian also, but he would add something further—'the knowledge of God'—and such knowledge is sought not in village relationships only. It is sought also in schools, in the religious teaching of the missionaries, in the scriptures, in worship, and in prayer.

060 Having considered some of the values[1] realized in age-villages, we now turn to the sanctions maintaining them.

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[1] It may be asked why we have omitted fertility in our discussion of values realized in village relationships, when fertility in men, cattle, and fields is one of the ultimate values of Nyakyusa society. The reason is that fertility is realized in the relationships of kinship and of the chiefdom, rather than in village relationships. The village rituals in the fields, which we have described, are primarily defensive—to protect the crops against the attacks of witches and sorcerers—and the fertility of the soil is held to depend mainly on the chief, and the rituals he performs on behalf of his country.

Christians are only affected by the shocked astonishment of fellow 795
Christians, not by the disapproval of pagans, and the unit within 754
which 'the curse' is commonly spoken of as operating is the congregation. 184
In two of the cases we recorded (*vide* Document,
p. 209) it was suggested that illness was due to the anger of 626
neighbours, fellow Christians, over stinginess and greed, but in the other cases it was not village neighbours who were primarily concerned, but the Christian congregation, a group embracing members from many villages.

The type of behaviour believed to be punishable by 'the curse' of fellow Christians also differs somewhat from that thought to be
punished by 'the breath of men'. The virtue Christians emphasize [831]
most is chastity, and 'the curse' is often said to be a punishment for fornication or adultery. The other sin commonly spoken of as bringing down a curse is disobedience, or disrespectful behaviour to the minister (or priest) or elder of the congregation. Among pagans 'the breath of men' serves also to sanction sexual morals and to sustain respect for those in authority, but their sex
code is different. It is incest, or familiarity between father- and [835]
daughter-in-law, which they regard as really evil, not sex relations outside marriage. And they emphasize respect to senior relatives and fathers' neighbours rather than to the leaders of any wider group.

Christians lay much less stress on hospitality to neighbours 795
than pagans, and it is generally agreed that they eat alone more
than pagans would dare to do. As one Christian put it, a pagan 574
would *always* call his neighbours to share meat or beer when he 184
had it, but a Christian might eat a sheep, or a goat, or even a calf,
alone with his family. It is good, the Christians say, to call friends 577 ●
to share a feast, but not an inescapable obligation. Nor do Christians regularly send the saddle and ribs of any animal they kill to the chief, as pagans do; 'for', they say, 'we do not fear "the breath of men".' But hospitality towards strangers is felt to be a condition of salvation. One informant explained that 'If a man is stingy towards his neighbours it does not matter; but if he is stingy towards a stranger from a distance, he might die from lack of food; and that would be the fault of the stingy one. Such a fault would prevent him from entering Heaven.' This statement points to the most striking difference between Christian and pagan morality—the range of moral obligations. A pagan's duties

795 are primarily to his kinsmen and fellow villagers, and secondarily to fellow members of his chiefdom; beyond the chiefdom and
574 circle of kinsmen he had, traditionally, no obligations. The
184 Christian definition of 'neighbour' is a much wider one. It is
577 emphasized by the missionaries that the Christian Church is universal, and Nyakyusa Christians themselves are conscious of their unity with, and obligations to, members of other chiefdoms, other cultural groups, and other races. The new sanctions for behaviour operating within the Christian group—the emphasis on Christian duty; the hope of that 'peace which passeth all understanding' and of eternal life; and the fear of suspension or expulsion from the communion of the faithful, and of hell-fire[1]—all these apply to relations beyond, as well as within, the village, the chiefdom, and the circle of kin.

795 Two other points were mentioned by Christian informants when discussing the differences between pagan and Christian
184 morality: they said that Christian children growing up were
577 liable to be 'proud' (*namatingo*) in their bearing and manner of greeting, because they do not fear 'the breath of men'; and also that Christian men were not afraid to ask many cattle for their daughters at marriage, again because they do not fear their neighbours' disapproval in the way pagans fear it. The implication is that there is less insistence upon conformity to a given code among Christians than among pagans; a greater tolerance of diversity of behaviour.

795 These differences between pagan and Christian dogma are matched by differences between their ritual. There are no
788 Christian rituals in which the village as a group, distinct from
184 other groups, is concerned. The congregation—the group worshipping in one church—is drawn from many villages, and though devout Christians living in the same neighbourhood often gather for morning and evening prayer, such rituals never include a whole village. Even in a Christian village on mission land only a small proportion of the villagers attend daily prayer regularly. As we have seen, the members of a pagan village meet from time to time to warn off witches, or to bless a repentant wrong-doer (*vide supra*, pp. 101, 109 ff.), but since belief in witchcraft or in 'the curse' is not orthodox among Christians, there is no ritual con-

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[1] cf. Monica Hunter, 'An African Christian Morality', *Africa*, Vol. X (1937), p. 265–91.

587 835 woman. It is scarcely surprising that the seduction of the young wives of an ageing father is a common theme for scandal. We do not suggest that the Oedipus complex involving own mother and son never occurs among the Nyakyusa; what we are concerned to show is that the relationship between a man and his stepmothers is particularly likely to be ambivalent.

593 584 It may be asked why there is so much emphasis on the segregation of sons from their parents, and not of daughters. The answer again lies in the sex difference in the marriage age. Betrothed girls pay long visits to their husbands even before puberty, and directly after the initiation which follows first menstruation they leave their fathers' home to join their husbands. During her initiation a girl carefully avoids her father and his contemporaries in the village, and after marriage, when she returns home to visit, she must observe certain restrictions not applicable to an unmarried girl: notably she must not approach her parents' bed, and informants interpret the taboo as being due to the danger of mixing the sex activities of mother and daughter.

621 835 In short, we argue that there is a connection between the existence of age-villages and the fear of incest between father-in-law and daughter-in-law on the one hand, and between stepson and stepmother on the other, and we suggest that certain features of the Nyakyusa social system facilitate incest of the second type. The incest theme elaborated in one fashion among people organized in clans and practising clan exogamy, and in another among people practising brother—sister avoidance, finds yet a different expression in age-villages, of which the overt purpose is the separation of sons and mothers, of fathers-in-law and daughters-in-law.

c. *Good company*

● 577 621 The emphasis on the separation of parents and children is matched by the value laid on good fellowship (*ukwangala*) between contemporaries. A main end of age-villages, in the Nyakyusa view, is to allow men the enjoyment of congenial company, that is the company of friends and equals. The value of *ukwangala* is, indeed, directly linked with the age-village organization: to attain it men must build not only in villages, rather than in scattered homesteads, but also with contemporaries rather than with kin, since there can be no free and easy inter-

course and sharing of food and beer between fathers and sons. 577
Ukwangala implies eating and drinking together frequently, and
cannot be fully enjoyed by people who do not live close to one 621
another.

The value of good fellowship with equals is constantly talked 577
about by the Nyakyusa, and it is dinned into boys from childhood 869
that enjoyment and morality alike consist in eating and
drinking, in talking and learning, in the company of contemporaries.
The solitary and aloof, those who enjoy the company of
women (as opposed to direct sexual satisfaction) and those who
seek intimacy with members of another generation, are derided.

Now this very emphasis on the value of good fellowship with 577
equals is doubtless a reflection of the difficulty of achieving it.
The frequent accusations of witchcraft and movement from one 578
village to another are evidence of friction between fellow villagers.
Does the friction turn on the age-village organization?

d. The incidence of accusations of witchcraft

As we have seen, witchcraft is believed to operate primarily 578
within the village, and the typical accusation is against a neighbour.[1] 754
But in other societies also witchcraft accusations are most
commonly made against those with whom one is living, and in
close daily contact: in Pondoland it is members of the same homestead
or of neighbouring homesteads who suspect one another of
witchcraft; among Xhosa-speaking people in towns it is fellow
employees, or fellow schoolmates; among the Azande it is members
of the same small neighbourhood. Therefore it is not
only the Nyakyusa who accuse village neighbours of witchcraft.

Of the *frequency* of accusation in different societies we can 754
make no comparison, for statistics on witchcraft are extremely
difficult to collect. Few field-workers could be certain that they
were cognizant of *every* accusation of witchcraft within a given

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[1] Over a third of the accusations of witchcraft recorded were against neighbours, as distinct from spouses or co-wives or kinsmen and, if one excludes the modern type of accusation against fellow workers in the same camp, the proportion of accusations against neighbours is almost one half. The thirty-eight witchcraft accusations cannot, of course, be taken as a random sample in the technical sense; we recorded every case that came to our ears, but cannot be certain that inquiries brought to light every accusation in the villages investigated. Nevertheless the preponderance of accusations against neighbours is significant (*vide* Document, pp. 198 ff.).

121 sarily implied all through, but since the argument can only be un-
128 folded step by step (for no one ritual can be fully analysed until all are described) a discussion of it is reserved to the concluding chapters. In interpreting the symbolism, cross reference between the different rituals of the cycles would be too frequent to give in the text. Readers wishing to follow up references to the symbolism of bananas, for example, or *ikipiki* medicine, should use the index.

771 The link between religious beliefs and morality (in the sense of
577 right behaviour) is very clear among the Nyakyusa. Many misfortunes are attributed to sin, that is, wrong-doings (*inongwa*) thought to be supernaturally punished. Indeed, to the Nyakyusa the idea of the wicked man 'spreading himself like a green bay tree'[1] is inconceivable, and the disciples' question: 'Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?'[2] cold common sense. Here we are concerned with the form of morality[3] sanctioned by Nyakyusa religion, with the conception of good and evil, and with
[128] the relation between belief and behaviour.[4] A table of private misfortunes attributed to the anger of senior relatives is included in this volume; public misfortunes will be discussed in the succeeding one; and a table of misfortunes attributed to witchcraft, sorcery, and the legitimate anger of neighbours ('the breath of men') has been given in the study of Nyakyusa age-villages already published.[5] While the Nyakyusa lay great emphasis on the correct performance, in every detail, of certain rituals, their very performance implies co-operation between kinsmen, and not only co-operation but amity. For 'anger in the heart', if unconfessed, may bring misfortune. Thus though the outward form is stressed, the inward and spiritual is not totally ignored.

121 We proceed on the assumption that men express in ritual what moves them most; that the form of expression is conventional and obligatory, and that therefore in ritual the values of a group (as opposed to those of individuals) are revealed.

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[1] Psalm xxxvii: 35. [2] John ix, 2.

[3] I cannot accept Professor Radcliffe-Brown's definition of morality as the control of conduct by 'public opinion and conscience' as opposed to control by religion. Nor do I accept Professor Macbeath's argument that primitive man has an idea of good quite apart from religion. A. E. Taylor's view of morality comes much closer to the facts as shown in Nyakyusa society.

cf. A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *Structure and Function in Primitive Society*, p. 172; A. Macbeath, *Experiments in Living*, Gifford Lectures 1948–9; A. E. Taylor, *The Faith of a Moralist*, Gifford Lectures 1926–8.

[4] The germ of the book is Godfrey Wilson's 'An African morality', *Africa*, 1936.

[5] Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 198–213.

602 763 is forgotten he will be angry: 'It happens sometimes that a kinsman comes in later, after the man is buried, and is very angry because no message was sent to him; he comes in a passion, and perhaps he beats his brother [the one who should have sent him a message]. Then the others catch hold of him and say: "Why do you not come soberly and greet us decently with the appropriate words? Come now, why?" And if he does not stop they beat him.'

602 764 These kinsmen and affines, with their wives and children, are under obligation to come to the burial, unless they are sick. Young children under the age of 10 or 11 are not obliged to come, though they often do, but older children must do so. One reason for the continuance of the burial ceremonies for three or four days is that this gives time for relatives from a distance to receive the messages and come. Deliberately to refuse to send a message or, on the [578] other side, to refuse to come to a burial for no good reason, is a symbolic breaking of the bond of kinship and no one ever does either, unless there is a serious quarrel and all economic and social relations are being broken off between the two families concerned.

621 764 ● 577 The village neighbours also are obliged to come to every burial in the village. They normally wish to do so, but, even if they do not, they still come for shame or for fear of being accused of witchcraft if they stay away. Where there is friendship the neighbours come in grief and sympathy and quarrels are softened by the fact of death, but, if the memory of enmity still persists, then the last sanctions are shame and fear: 'Some people mourn more than others.' 'The men who knew him say: "Let us go and mourn him."' 'Those who did not know him intimately mourn because each thinks: "He has died, my neighbour, and so will it be with me one day."' 'If I have quarrelled with my neighbour and he dies, I go to his burial for I say to myself: "It is true that while he lived we quarrelled, but now he is dead and we shall never meet again. I too will go to his burial and mourn him."' 'If a village neighbour does not come to a burial we say he is unkindly and unsociable.' 'And if a man does not go to his neighbour's burial then at once people say: "It was you who bewitched him. Why else do you not come to bury him?"' Several of the accusations of witchcraft recorded had been occasioned by a man's absence from a village neighbour's funeral. For it is believed that witches are chary of going to the burials of their victims lest the dead should rise and denounce them.

643 764 A chief normally goes to all burials in his own country, except

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Selya, Mu Ngonde

789 would never dry up.' Kasitile said: 'The work of the *undumila* and
841 *ikipiki* are the same, they are together. The heavy ones will over-
step the girl, they are going to injure her so that she is barren,
constantly menstruating, with painful periods.' Lyandileko, a
woman doctor, and exceptionally intelligent, said: 'The bride
[753] uses the *ikipiki* medicine because she is empty (*bwasi*). So she
washes and eats bananas with *ikipiki*. If she does not wash with it
she will have diarrhœa.'

789 The *ikipiki* is also said to make a bride 'patient and polite'. 'If
● 577 the girl did not wash with the powdered medicine (*ikipiki*) she
might be rude and proud when she went to her husband's home
and insult men there.' This was the statement of Mwakwelebeja,
an old commoner particularly well versed in matters of ritual, and
it was separately confirmed both by his wife and by Lyandileko,
the woman doctor, but not everyone knew the connection. Mwaihojo, the chief, who was present when Mwakwelebeja gave his
explanation, said: 'Really! I never knew that!' and his wives,
when applied to, said: 'We don't know. The mothers have died'
(this though some of them were past middle age).

613 Angombwike identified the *ikipiki* medicine with the blood of a
789 lineage and a bride's treatment with it with the union in marriage.
581 He said:

> As soon as a girl grows up people begin to think about her bearing children. They say: 'The molten iron is discharged, the blood for bearing children has come.' When they grind and brew beer in her honour, they do it in honour of her 'iron' [i.e. menstrual blood]. They give her medicines for disciplining her in the lineage of her husband. When the mothers hear they cry: 'Ours, ours, it has fruited! (*Ifyeto, ifyeto, fipele*).' The girl is given a bundle of the medicine, powdered, and is made to wear a belt of bark-cloth with the powder in it; the medicine is brought from the husband's home by his mothers. The husband, as it were, says: 'That is my blood [or semen] which I have sent to her.' The little bundle is the symbol (*ikimanyilo*) of the child she will bear, the belt with medicine on it means that the molten 'iron' belongs to the blood of that husband. The powdered medicine is brought by the husband's mother. A man's chief wife always has a bamboo flask or a pot full of medicine of their lineage (*ja kikololo kyabo*), powdered ready for use. If she dies it goes to the second wife, if the husband dies to the first wife of the eldest son, and by her it is distributed at need. The powdered medicine is the blood (*imbondanya*[1] *lyo ilopa*).

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[1] i.e. the powder made from the *ikipiki*.

431 neighbours give her gifts after her initiation it is that she may 'cease to avoid them', and a woman may give a small gift to her husband's father's sister, and thereafter look at her. [606] Nowadays, a father-in-law, in exceptional cases, kills a bull for his daughter-in-law so that she may look at him.[1]

556 •577 Great prestige attaches to generosity, particularly generosity with food. A chief or village headman is one who *feeds* people, and generosity is displayed both in informal feasts for neighbours and on the formal occasions of ritual. A father who is generous in the feasts provided for his daughter at her initiation and marriage gains prestige; if he is stingy his affines and his neighbours comment on it; he both loses their respect and fears lest he may even fall ill from 'the breath of men'. If the groom's family fail to provide sufficient, the bride's father does not hesitate to scold them for it, and they reply with humility which may be so exaggerated as to verge on boasting. It is conventional for the groom to plead poverty but at the same time he and his kin compete with the bride's family in preparing quantities of fine food. The pride and excitement over feasts is clearly brought out in the comments on funerals, the remarks of a mother on the return of her daughter to her husband after the birth of the first child, and Angombwike's account of marriage negotiations and gifts (pp. 31–4, 148, 253–5). The principals in any ritual are the centre of attention and may gain prestige from its performance, as a bride does, but what concerns the Nyakyusa much more is the reputation of the family serving the feast. [171] Here the emphasis is very different from what it is in the Pondo ritual for the initiation of diviners, or the Lunda rituals of misfortune.

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[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, p. 85.

577 There is much more talk among the Nyakyusa of misfortune
777 from the shades or the anger of neighbours, than of blessing, but
556 there is an idea, somewhat vague but real, that generosity and
kindliness will bring blessing (*ulusajo*). Ambilikile, a Christian
teacher who had grown up in a pagan home, said:

> My mother tells me that my father was in the habit of feeding people, those who were not his relatives. People went to a distance and brought medicines for fertility and gave them to him, hence they said: 'He is very kind; food never grows short at his home.' She also told me that my father died very old. He did not die of disease, but of old age, no breath being left in him. This was because men were always saying: 'May they stand by him, may they bless him (*bammwemelege, bansajege*),' not to his face but to others. They said that he lived long because of the blessing of men. Yes, they say that the food of a kindly man never gets finished, that of a stingy man finishes; he himself suffers hunger.

763 Mwaisumo described a father on his death-bed blessing a favourite son, allocating cattle to him, and telling him:

> Care for the children I have left, keep on good terms with them, then you will be rich in everything like your father. I cared for my children, I was not harsh (*nkali*), so complain to me of anything that troubles you. If you are like this the property in your home will be plentiful, people will be astonished and say: 'He is like his father.'

431 Of a man given a cow by the chief, it was sometimes said: 'The
775 shades have blessed him; he has a righteous (*ngolofu*) shade.'

Although our Nyakyusa informants talked a great deal about
754 the danger of neglecting rituals and angering senior relatives,
673 living and dead, the number of cases of misfortune attributed to
621 their anger is small in comparison with the number attributed to
witchcraft or 'the breath of men'. (Ten as compared with sixty-three.) There is no reason to suppose that one type of case was concealed when the others were reported to us, and it is clear that the Nyakyusa prefer to make neighbours in the age-village, rather than kinsmen, the scapegoat for their misfortunes. Even when the wrong done is against a kinsman it is often the neighbours, rather than the shades, who are said to have brought punishment on the wrong-doer.

777 At the same time, we were assured by one informant after an-
621 other that people blame the shades or Kyala for misfortune when
it is really the neighbours who are responsible! Angombwike argued that men fear to accuse the neighbours, who are slow to

613 602 though wives are assimilated to their husbands' lineages for ritual purposes, men play no part in the rituals of their wives' lineages.

613 •577 The second fundamental principle expressed in the rituals of kinship is that a moral law holds within the lineage. Senior kinsmen, living and dead, have a mystical power over their juniors, but their anger is dangerous only if it is just. They cannot mutter irresponsibly. Kinsmen are 'members of one another' in the sense that the life and death of one affect the others. The sins of a father are visited on his children, his juniors in the lineage (though a woman's sins affect only her own husband and children), and the very fact of kinship makes a mystical bond between agnatic kin, descendants of a common great-grandfather, and a man and his daughters or sister's children. The moral law is thought to operate also within the age-village, where the just are protected and the evil punished by 'the breath of men'; but within both lineage and village irresponsible and malicious injury by witches or sorcerers is possible.

777 787 When misfortune occurs the sufferer, and his kinsmen and neighbours, seek an explanation in conflicts and ritual omissions, and interpret the misfortune in terms of these, putting the possible alternatives before the oracle. Thus the danger of conflict with kinsmen and neighbours, and of neglect of ritual, is constantly before men's minds. In practice, there is a strong tendency to push the blame for misfortune outside the lineage of living and dead on to the neighbours.

000 (*b*) *The celebration of rituals and maintenance of the structure*

In any society the practical, intellectual, and emotional aspects are mutually dependent; the practical organization is dependent upon, and at the same time supports, an intellectual system—certain cosmological ideas—and attitudes. It has been argued very cogently that these ideas and attitudes are maintained by their expression in myth and rite[1] but little evidence for this has been published. Can objective evidence be collected? The anthropologist cannot look into men's minds; he is not concerned with personal religion—with the varieties of religious experience. Can he observe any effect of participation in ritual upon the behaviour of groups and categories of people? It must be admitted that our evidence here is thin.

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[1] A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *The Andaman Islanders* (1922), pp. 236 ff.; *Structure and Function in Primitive Society* (1952), pp. 157 ff.

CHAPTER VI

Law & Crime

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LAW, morals, and religion are inseparably bound up together. The old idea, still hard to kill, that in the native mind morals and religion have no connection with each other, is the reverse of the truth; but African ideas of morality do not always coincide with European, and to this disparity may be traced the belief that there is no morality in African religion. The sinless man is the man who has broken no law. He is said to be *mweru*, without offence. Now as law and custom are one, and as the spirits are jealous for the retention of all customs that were in force while they were on earth, the man who is assured of a good reception in the underworld is he who has either broken no law of custom, or, having broken the law, has made the required atonement to the injured person.

671 Everything was settled in the long distant past by the fathers, and all one has to do is to conform. For the long domination of ancient custom in law, morals, and religion, meant that life had attained to a condition of stable equilibrium, before the coming of the white man set all in confusion again for many of the people. The ancient equilibrium was disturbed by

protective powers of the drug are securely transferred 251
to his own stock.

A man who does not hoe is held in supreme contempt, 577
but he does not starve. His neighbours give him food, seizing the opportunity to add much sound advice. But lazy men are held in suspicion, for it is highly probable that they will become garden thieves.

When there is reason to anticipate a general scarcity 261
of food, the spirits are invited to confirm or dissipate 787
fears. The chief orders a collection of *malesi* (millet) to be made, each village headman bringing the contribution of his people in a small basket. One headman is selected whose wife makes the beer, the behaviour of which indicates the spirit's answer to the question put. The beer is poured into a large calabash, and thence into two cups, which are placed at the *masyeto* (graves of the dead chiefs). There they are left for the night, and if in the morning the beer is found to have risen in the cups, filling them to the top, the harvest will be good; otherwise it will be bad. If the signs are good, all care is cast away, beer is made in great quantities, and drinking and feasting take the place of the previous anxiety. But when the spirits foretell a bad harvest the utmost economy is practised, and the chief is bound to see that no one makes prodigal use of his resources.

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crops are planted at different seasons of the year so that there is always 512 some hoeing to be done.

In a polygynous family each wife has her own fields (*embaka*), hoed 595 by her husband and her own sons, which she plants, weeds and reaps 241 with the help of her own daughters, and the produce of which she uses to 423 cook for her husband, her own children and herself. The relative rights of husband and wife to dispose of produce vary with different crops, but no co-wife has any rights over a woman's food. She may, and often does, ask her co-wives to help in her fields and sends them presents of cooked food from her own fire, she may help them and receive presents in return; but they have no rights over her fields or her food, only her husband and herself. And the fields which are hoed by a bachelor son belong to his own mother, who in her turn cooks food for him to eat.

Each wife has either a hut to herself, or else a separate alcove in a 595 large hut, and there she has her fire for cooking. She fetches her own firewood and water or sends an unmarried daughter for them.

At meals the ages and the sexes eat separately; in some polygynous 264 families each wife sends a dish to the husband, in others the wives take it 595 in turns to cook for him. The husband eats alone or with neighbours of his own age[7] to share his dish, the older boys and their friends[7] eat separately from the younger children, and each mother again usually eats with her own daughters, apart.

In the relationship of husband and wife the chief elements are sexual 593 intercourse, co-operation in work, the procreation of children and factors 577 of personal inclination, character and temperament. By men women 581 are praised for sexual skill, cleanliness and beauty, for good cooking and hard work, for their fecundity, and for gentleness of speech and behaviour, and those with opposite qualities are criticized. Among women men are praised for sexual skill and attentiveness, for vigour in hoeing and skill in house-building, and for kindness; while sexual neglect, laziness, impotence and cruelty are disliked and may cause a woman to leave her husband for another man.

The birth of children is a most important factor in the marriage 842 relationship, for children are greatly desired both by men and women. 595 They are desired for themselves and also because they bring their parents 581 wealth and prestige; a boy will one day work in the fields of his father and mother, a girl will bring in cattle from her marriage. And the possession of children brings compliments and respect both to man and woman.

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[7] Vide infra "*The Age-Village*."[1]

[1] [Cat. 116, pp. 269 ff. --Analyst]

621 561 others as well. Any boys' village is found to consist primarily of the sons of the members of some older village who originally gave the land for its building, but as we shall see later sons of other villages live there too.

621 342 At the beginning, when a group of boys starts a new age-village, or when boys join one already formed, they do not all have a hut to themselves, two or three friends share a hut. But later, as they grow older, each builds for himself. The younger ones build their huts of reeds, but the older ones try to get a few bamboos from their fathers or senior relatives and build more solid houses. Married men build entirely of bamboo, but often in a boys' village you will find a compromise between bamboo and reed, both being used in the same house; and the houses of bachelors, even though they be all of bamboo, are smaller than those of married men. The technique of good building is not very difficult, and the older boys instruct and help their juniors, as they join the village, to improve the skill playfully acquired as herd-boys so as to build more substantial huts.

245 262 The chief food of the Nyakyusa is the banana; men plant bananas immediately round their huts, though their fields are mostly at a distance. And bachelors, while they continue to eat their main meals at their parents' village, plant bananas round their own huts as well. Bananas begin to bear very quickly, sometimes within a year of planting, and so, soon after the establishment of a boys' village, its members have bananas of their own, which they cook for themselves and eat with their friends at odd times during the day. But they have as yet no fields.

864 [881] 577 There is no formal initiation of boys at puberty; but, on the other hand, the custom of leaving home and joining a boys' village is directly connected by the Nyakyusa with their ideas of decency in sexual life. ● They think it is perfectly all right to discuss sex openly among friends of about the same age but altogether wrong to discuss it either in the presence of, or with, their parents or those of their parents' generation. If a boy learns about love-making, in any way, from his parents the Nyakyusa think that he will not respect them properly and that he himself will be a fool. A boy must learn these things from his immediate seniors and friends. One man said to me: "If a boy after about ten years old stays at home to sleep, he is laughed at by his friends and his own parents send him away. They say: 'If he sleeps at home he will hear what his parents talk about at night, the night is always full of lewd talk; and he may even see them undressing. He will grow up a fool, with little wisdom.' You see at the boys' village" he went on to say, "the older

boys tell all sorts of stories, especially about women, they discuss love- 864
making and women, and tell tales of their own conquests. The younger 577
ones listen to these things and that is all right in the boys' village, that is how we learn. But we compare in our minds and think that if a boy stays at home it is as if he listened to all this from his parents, and people always do talk lewdly at night; and that is very bad, that is foolishness.—But in the boys' village it is good for the young ones to listen, that is how children grow up."

On another occasion when I told this same man that in Europe many people thought it a good thing for boys to get sexual instruction from their parents and teachers he was shocked: "But I think it is impossible" he protested "for parents to go into detail with their children; there is too much shame on both sides. And if they did, it would damage the children's respect for them."

There is thus a correlation in this society between the age-village system at its genesis and the belief that a boy's dawning interest in sex must be informed, not by his parents, but by friends only a little older than himself.

Few men marry before twenty-five years of age, but affairs with 582
girls begin before puberty. All affairs are related in detail to friends in 836
the age-village, and the younger ones learn by listening; and they also [202]
learn when the older boys send them as messengers to the girls of their fancy.

Besides the more serious love affairs which are carried on in secret, 835
groups of boys from the same age-village commonly flirt with any girls 867
they meet on the way, and it is then that the incest taboos are learnt. If one of the boys is known to be related to one of the girls, either through a common grandfather or great-grandfather, his companions send him away: "Don't you see your sister is here? You cannot come!"

Contrary to a general belief about "primitive" societies, homosexual 838
intercourse is common in the boys' villages, between close friends, but there is no real perversion; homosexuality is said to be always *faute de mieux*. The older men in discussion dismiss it with the tolerant word "adolescence," it is never continued after marriage, and all except the feeble-minded get married sooner or later.

But life in a boys' village also gives its members much information 621
and wisdom unconnected with sex. There, as we have seen, boys perfect 868
their skill in building, and there also they learn to argue and express 867
themselves with adult fluency. It is characteristic of the Nyakyusa legal

621 868 867 system that small cases between neighbours are always first discussed and often finally settled in the presence of some friend or friends who act as arbitrators, without recourse to the constituted political authorities. Small disputes about petty theft, the possession of a cloth or some coppers, the ownership of a banana stem and so on, are as frequent in the boys' village as elsewhere, and as elsewhere the people concerned often argue it out to a finish before some friend or neighbour. And by listening to such disputes, or participating in them either as judge or principal, the boys acquire rhetorical skill and some knowledge of law. In some boys' villages there is a recognized leader appointed by the political authorities of the chiefdom to settle graver disputes, in others there is not. The position of such a leader, where there is one, will be discussed later.

● 577 621 Above all the boys' village gives to its members the conversation and company of more of their own contemporaries than did the group of herd boys, and company the Nyakyusa hold to be the greatest of educators. In the most explicit discourse I heard on the value of company my informant explained that cleanliness, together with rhetorical and conversational skill, were all learned in company. These are his exact words: " We say that it is by conversing with our friends that we gain wisdom; it is bad to sit quite silent always in men's company. A man who does this seems to us a fool, he learns no wisdom, he has only his own thoughts. And a man who does not spend time with other people is always dirty, he does not compare himself with any friend. We say that we learn cleanliness of body in company, the dirty ones learn from their more cleanly friends. Again if a man is accused to the chief and is unable to defend himself easily and with eloquence we mock at him and say: ' What is the matter with you? Do you live all by yourself? How is it that you are so foolish?' We think that wisdom and cleanliness are the two great things learnt in company. We think it is bad to live alone far from other people, such a man learns nothing; he never learns to express himself well, to converse pleasantly with friends or to argue a case with eloquence. It is better to live with other people."

621 561 At first the sons of the parent village continue to join the boys' village as they grow up; but after some years, when the senior members of the boys' village are about seventeen or eighteen years old, the younger ones begin to be refused admittance to the village: " they are children." The young ones then either begin a new age-village of their own, or else join a village which has already been started by the sons of a nearby men's village a little junior to that of their own fathers. If you enquire who are the members of such and such a boys' village you are always told that they are the sons of a particular village of men, but detailed investiga-

Since the 'coming out' of his sons spelt not only retirement, but 643
a speedy death to a chief, he was not unnaturally reluctant to
hasten it and, we were told, chiefs would try to defer it, but were
pressed by their village headmen to celebrate, and had eventually
to accept their advice. Indeed we heard of one chief whose illness [753]
was attributed to the 'breath' of his men, angry because he
refused to hold the 'coming out' which was due.

Nowadays the situation is radically altered by the fact that chiefs continue to live long after the 'coming out' of their sons, and the administration treats the old chief as the sole authority, or the old men find good reasons for not holding the celebration at all.

Before the ritual there is much speculation and excitement
throughout the chiefdom, and private discussions between the old
chief and his village headmen about suitable candidates for office.
They look for men of wisdom (*amahala*),[1] skilled in settling disputes, [183]
modest (for boastfulness is judged intolerable in a Nyakyusa [577]
age-village as it is in an English public school), and given to
hospitality. A leader must feed his men and to do so he requires to
be relatively wealthy, therefore the poor have little chance of
office.

When the old men are agreed among themselves they summon 643
all the young men to the capital. They come dancing and swaggering 622
with all their cattle, and there the old headmen seize, one by 796
one, those they have chosen as village headmen for the next
generation, beginning with the senior headman for each heir, then
the second senior for each, and so on. Usually eight are chosen,
four for each young chief. We get a glimpse of what it means to
one individual in the following statement by the second headman
of the chief, Koroso (173):

> I made fire at the 1910 'coming out'. I can't tell much because we [177]
> who were caught were in fear and trembling. I knew beforehand,
> because my brother was told to come from Ipyana [mission], but he
> was a Christian and the missionaries refused to allow him to become a
> village headman—they feared the medicines. He ran away and came
> here—he wanted to be a headman and the old men wanted him, but
> then he changed his mind and went off to be a soldier, and so they
> took me.

Probably word of who have been chosen as village headmen assuaged and men should be *mwelu*, pure, innocent, without anger 769 in their hearts. But, as has been shown, this quality of purity is the 783 very *opposite* of spiritual power (*amanga* or *ubusisya*). It is attributed neither to Kyala and the other heroes nor to the priests; according to Kasitile (p. 138) a pure person cannot be a commoner priest and the chiefs themselves, though *mwelu*—pale—by comparison with the black commoners who are witches, are also 'heavy' (*nsito*) with the medicines they have drunk. Men become *mwelu* by confession; 'speaking out' is a condition of efficacy in sacrifice and the officiant blows out water as a symbol of bringing up all the anger that was in his heart. The parents of twins and the priests of Lubaga, having celebrated their awful rituals emerge, crying, '*Tuli belu*'—we are pure. The very quality which rituals produce in men is the *opposite* of that which characterizes their heroes, their priests, and their rulers. Galahad whose 'strength was as the strength of ten because his heart was pure' is wholly foreign to Nyakyusa thought.

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[1] For a discussion of the content of *amahala*, cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 89-90.

Truthfulness was never mentioned as a characteristic of the righteous or the pure, nor is it a quality of the heroes or priests. [577] Men censure one another for *ubutungulu* which is commonly translated as 'lying', but means rather 'speaking indiscreetly'. In one Nyakyusa text the child who is told certain ritual secrets by his father and reveals them when he should not is *ntungulu*, and this is an accepted use of the word. No burning concern with truth or falsehood is apparent in the Nyakyusa tradition though they are passionately interested in what they conceive to be right and wrong.

The conception of witchcraft and sorcery implies a freedom, a [754] choice of good or evil, for the individual. Much is determined. In [688] Nyakyusa thought, the sins of the fathers are visited on the children, and a child may fall ill because his great-grandfather shed blood or was bound with ropes, and was not adequately cleansed, or because his father has neglected a ward; moreover, kinsmen are 'members one of another', and a ritual neglected by one may bring suffering to others; but there is *also* the notion of individual responsibility. A witch or sorcerer acts consciously and voluntarily—our informants scouted the idea of a witch being unaware of his actions—and he may repent and desist. There are [177] now, periodically in Africa, 'revivalist' movements in which a pagan doctor or diviner urges men to throw away their evil medicines and repent from their witchcraft. One such movement

Christians in Ngonde (e.g. *amapenenga*) have been banned by the 797x
Kirk Sessions. The European-style dances, such as are sometimes 795x
organized by the educated men in centres like Karonga or [535]
Tukuyu, are not attended by these men's wives: respectable [684]
women avoid them. While we lived near Rungwe mission there was much discussion among the villagers over what recreations were permissible, and hot arguments between those who wished to permit beer drinking and dancing to Christians and those who wished to ban both. It is the Nyakyusa elders who are most puritan in their views—much more so than many of the missionaries who are very conscious of the need for recreation; indeed, the Livingstonia Presbytery once instructed all its Sessions to look into the
matter. The chief outlet for young Christians is in ballads. A good [533]
singer is much admired and the composer may even sell his songs, with words and music written out. One of the former missionaries is honoured as the man who first taught the Nyakyusa to read music as well as to sing by ear.

In pagan thought moral obligations are limited to kinsmen and 795x
neighbours: they do not extend beyond the chiefdom except to 797x
those relatives who may live beyond its bounds. As we have
shown, the common moral sanctions are the anger of senior 577 ●
relatives, and 'the breath of men', and these operate only within the lineage and age-village. But Christians have read the parable of the Good Samaritan and taken it to heart. Sermons stress this: 'If a Kinga comes and asks for a place to sleep the night and you refuse you are among the goats.' 'If a traveller from the coast asks for a place to sleep and you refuse, do you show love?' 'We tell a bride she should be hospitable to her neighbours if she can, but she *must* cook for those from a distance.' It is one of the points on which the Christians are most conscious of a difference between themselves and the pagans. And the exclusiveness of Europeans is one of the reasons why they are distinguished from Christians in the song on the title page of *Rituals of Kinship*. 'If all Europeans made friends with us (*ukwangala*) like X and Y', we were told, 'the whole country would have been Christian long ago.'

Linked with the concern for strangers is the obligation to preach the Gospel to others—something constantly stressed in sermons, and finding expression both in preaching in the surrounding villages and in tours of more remote areas, often areas of another language. Such tours implied hardship in travelling and a

x 797 leap in sympathy; as one of our friends explained, she found it
x 795 hard to accept food from the neighbouring Safwa who were 'so
dirty in their cooking'.

● [577] Both pagans and Christians pin their faith to resurrection, but
the interpretations differ radically. To the pagan the shade is
[775] resurrected 'in the body of his child', it scarcely has any separate
existence. To Christians the personality, the individual soul, is
something indestructible and continuing. This theological difference is but one facet of a deep cleavage between the pagan view of a man and his relations with his group, and the Christian view.

[183] Because the traditional religion is a cult of the shades, piety consists in doing just as father did. It is neglect of traditional rituals, departure from traditional ways, that is held to bring madness, sterility, or death. But Christianity is revolutionary; it is the yeast working in society to transform it. That is often forgotten in communities with a Christian tradition, but where the Gospel has been preached only for a generation and confessing Christians are but one in six, it is in men's minds all the time. The Nyakyusa could not be unaware that the Gospel implied changing their society.

[796] In the pagan tradition the meticulous performance of the rituals
is stressed: the right medicines; the right persons; the right order of
[688] events are all important. The attitude of mind of the participants
matters also—if they are on bad terms the ritual will be ineffective
—but goodwill and forgiveness alone are useless without the performance of the proper ritual. In the Christian tradition, as interpreted to us by Nyakyusa converts, it is the inward and spiritual attitude of the participants that is stressed.

Finally, all the pagan rituals are directed to driving off the
[771] shades or the heroes, whereas the Christian rituals are the 'means
of grace', of coming near to God. Christians pray that the Holy Spirit should take up his abode within them; they seek to emulate the saints who 'walked with God'. Our Christian friends were quite clear about the contrast here between the pagan and Christian tradition: it is crystallized in the attitude to dreams: if a pagan dreams of converse (*ukwangala*) with shades, he fears death; 'if a Christian dreams of converse with God he rejoices greatly because it means he is gaining strength in Christianity.'

311 423 [554] [609] [622] news of such reserved land elsewhere. Such land is cultivated in the meantime on a kind of year-to-year lease by one or more of the villagers as allowed by the headman.

Even when no vacant plots exist a headman will still accept newcomers. If they are young men they must be prepared to go landless for the time being (i.e., to remain dependent on their father's fields elsewhere) until such time as land becomes vacant. If the newcomer is an older man, then the headman will try to persuade one or more of his villagers to give up portions of their holdings and he will often cede part of his own land. The newcomer is therefore often allocated small strips and plots here and there in the village arable area and he thereafter joins the land-hungry crowd seeking to expand their holdings. In one village in which I worked where land shortage was critical (Kapugi, Koroso's chiefdom), there was not a single patch of usable land unworked; yet here the headman had, with full village approval, accepted three newcomers during the first nine months of 1955. Two of them were young men, one unmarried, and they could not expect to obtain land for some time except for a small banana plot. The third newcomer was a middle-aged man from a village some 12 miles away in another chiefdom. The headman had given him a half-acre plot out of his own paddy field and was laboriously begging pieces of land here and there from his people in order to make up a new holding of perhaps an acre. The headman himself had only about three and a half acres of arable land; he had at least one adult son who had not yet acquired an arable plot and he had other sons and brothers' sons owning only small fields. Yet he favoured this stranger, this newcomer. He was quite firm in his resolution to accept other ● [977] newcomers in the future and in this he believed that he was acting as a good headman should. As far as I could learn he was supported by his villagers.

This is not, by any means, an isolated or even unusual phenomenon. It is, I feel, important to bear in mind this illustration of contemporary affairs. Firstly, because it shows another way in which holdings are fragmented and dispersed; and secondly, because it demonstrates how, so far, the Nyakyusa have refused to face the situation of land shortage, and how they continue to follow traditional practices and values associated with village prestige. These people complain of their inability to obtain sufficient arable land, but they are not yet prepared to make the mental and social adjustments which might at least partly relieve their new predicament. On the other hand, they themselves understand the need for movement and perhaps they are right in their implied insistence not to discard their cultural ideals. Their insistence on accepting newcomers and their willingness (however dimly perceived and expressed) to share their land with the landless are not discreditable attitudes, even if they are economically untenable.

Security of Tenure and Disputes over Land

As already noted, under traditional land tenure a Nyakyusa had good [561] security in his holding so long as he continued to live in the same village. The only alteration of tenure occurred at the "coming-out" ceremony of a new chief when the older men would, if required, move aside in order to give their sons' generation the best land. This did not invariably happen in any case. Fundamentally, however, security of tenure is not a matter of great importance to a people who have plenty of land, and land which is more or less of the same quality. Indeed, convenience of location in respect of one's own homestead was almost the only value land had as such. Occasionally a more dominant chief might try to seize a commoner's field [661] to allow of his own expanded cultivation; it was most unusual for him to [643] succeed, and even if he did the dispossessed villager suffered little real deprivation, for he could easily obtain another field fairly near at hand.

311 flood plains paddy fields where the ox-plough is in general use today. The 423 general advantages of consolidation require no exposition here.

In view of the domestic, economic and social importance of cattle to [233] the Nyakyusa and their potential value in a mixed intensive economy, and also in view of the fact that cattle are widely held in very small numbers by individual families, it is suggested that further and more urgent attempts be made to encourage stall-feeding, especially during the wet season. It is realised that past efforts in this matter have failed, and therefore a thorough-going scheme of propaganda and demonstration work is needed. Small fodder crops might be grown in the dry season and there is always plenty of banana fodder as makeweight.

The problem of the landless young men is likely to remain very difficult (see pages 36ff). It has to be remembered of course, that as they get older men do acquire land gradually. Nevertheless the proportion of landless, or [167] virtually landless, men is high and is apparently increasing. The large-scale, post-war labour migration to the Rhodesias and South Africa is undoubtedly one of the more important results of land shortage and economic difficulty, and it is a valuable safety valve. As I have written elsewhere: "The serious and increasing land shortage amongst the Nyakyusa raises real doubts if there is any policy at all which can keep the men at home when there is not enough land for them – for the sake of both economic and general social stability it might be preferable in the long run if the continued pressure on the land resources were released by a degree of permanent emigration."[1] Since writing that and during the course of my land investigations I have only become more convinced of its rightness. I would now go so far as to say that [464] Nyakyusa men should be encouraged to go abroad to work and even to become permanent wage-labourers in the industries and areas which demand labour and offer a higher standard of living. If the Nyakyusa are not to be seriously retarded in their home economic development, based as it must be on agriculture (i.e. on the land), the excess population must find an outlet elsewhere.

[624] The general tendency towards greatly increased exclusiveness in the Nyakyusa village, involving renewed emphasis on the principle of land-[597] holding only by residence and the forfeiture of a holding when changing residence, raises wider issues the future significance of which is not easily seen, especially by the Nyakyusa themselves. This narrow village parochialism does little to meet the increasingly difficult problem of land shortage, whilst the isolation it fosters is the antithesis of the wider outlook required by a developing society in a world money economy. I am fully aware of the strong native sentiment attached to the village and to village independence, but this was in fact diminishing in earlier European times before the new land scarcity set in (see pages 29-30). I do not think that this village system and the complex of attitudes and values it fosters is adequate to provide for the future – a future which the Nyakyusa do not yet clearly foresee. With some deference, therefore, I offer the following suggestion: a man who already has a holding should be able to retain it when he moves to live in another village. If his new home is too far away for the continued cultivation of all or part of the holding, or for any other valid reason, he should be able to sell or give it to anyone he wishes. Such gift or sale could be supervised by the headman of the village in which the holding lies. It might well, at first at any rate, be limited to a member of the same village, either an established villager or another man who is willing to come and live there. I think it important that disposal should be outright and not on leasehold terms, for the latter would most propably engender further complications and uncertainty of tenure, which must be avoided.

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[1] Gulliver, P. H.: *A Report on the Migration of African Workers to the South from the Southern Highlands Province, with special reference to the Nyakyusa of Rungwe District.* Provincial Administration, Tanganyika, 1955, page A21.

563 constitution (about which they asked many questions) was a
622 democratic one; for, they said, the Administration always supported
the chiefs against the commoners.

621 The villages to which commoner leaders are appointed differ
from all other Bantu villages of which we have knowledge in that
they consist of groups of age-mates, not groups of kinsmen;
boys build with contemporaries and remain with them through
life; girls join the villages of their husbands at marriage; therefore
relatives, other than husband and wife and young children, do
602 not live together. Nevertheless kinship ties are important, for
property circulates within the kinship group rather than within
the village, and kinsmen are believed to be mystically interdependent,
in a way in which fellow villagers are not. The most prized
[556] possession of the Nyakyusa are cattle, for cattle enable a man to
marry, to live in comfort, to gain prestige by feasting his friends;
and cattle pass along the roads of kinship. They pass between
brothers, and half-brothers, and the sons of brothers; between
fathers and sons; and between affines. Kinsmen also participate
in common rituals, praying to common ancestors, and seeking
protection from mystical dangers which are thought to travel, like
●[578] cattle, along the roads of kinship. Ever fearful lest a quarrel
among them should bring misfortune on all, they strive to live
in harmony.

The range of kinship recognized varies somewhat with the
status of the family concerned and the proximity and personalities
of its members, but, generally speaking, economic and religious
co-operation link the descendants of a common grandfather, and
marriage between the descendants of a common great-grandfather
[581] is excluded. A legal marriage is effected by the passage of
cattle from the groom's group to the bride's, and it is this passage
which is said to create kinship (*ubukamu*), with the consequent
mystical interdependence, between a man and his wife, and
between the one partner in a marriage and the close kinsmen of
595 the other. Polygyny is the ideal of every pagan, and it is made
possible by the ten years' difference in the average marriage age
428 of men and women. Girls are betrothed very young and finally
join their husbands at puberty, while few pagan men marry under
twenty-five. Inherited cattle are controlled by the older generation
and polygyny is the prerogative of age. For property passes
not directly from father to son, but from brother to brother,

salary to him. This reduces the second son to the position of a minor chief as effectively as a defeat in war might have done in the old days. But, while the action of warfare only occasionally led to the subordination of one of the brothers, this action of the Government does so invariably, and always subordinates the younger brother. When a senior chief dies, on the other hand, the salary is usually divided; the bulk of it goes to the first son, together with the position of senior chief, while the second son is given the salary of an ordinary chief. 643 177

Nevertheless, whether the junior brother is to become a chief in receipt of a salary or not, he still goes through the 'coming out' ceremony with his brother, and is apportioned villages and headmen. Even in a country in which there are several minor chiefs there still is the division into two, some being regarded as subordinate to the senior heir, and the others to the junior. Division of a chiefdom into two at the 'coming out' is the basic form which is maintained, at least ceremonially, despite all modifications.

The introduction of Courts and salaries has brought a new element into the relationship between the old chief and his heirs. Only one of them can receive the salary and they commonly dispute about it. Quarrels are particularly frequent over the position of senior chief, for the presidency of a Court carries with it a relatively large salary. Old senior chiefs cling to the position long after their sons have 'come out'. There is no compulsory superannuation of chiefs, and the traditional mechanism for getting rid of an old chief when his sons were ready to take over—strangulation by his councillors—no longer operates. The old headmen remain in power along with the old chief. Thus one effect of British Administration in Nyakyusa country has been to maintain the older generation in power much longer than was traditionally usual, and to delay the assumption of full responsibility for government by the younger generation. 643 177 578

Another modern change which has far-reaching effects is the omission in some chiefdoms of the 'coming out' ceremony. When there is no 'coming out' the old men do not move aside to make room for their sons, and consequently the territorial demarcation between villages of old and young becomes blurred. Among the neighbouring people of Ngonde the 'coming out' ceremony has been dropped. There boys still build apart from their fathers, and the villages of young and old are more or 643 177 621

264 562 574 husband will not be angry; if he were, he would be mocked at: "Did not your father provide marriage-cattle for this woman for you that she might be the wife (*unkasi*) of us all?" Sometimes, when the woman is cooking, her husband's friends come and take food out of the pot before she has finished cooking. When she protests, saying it is not yet cooked, the men say: "It is your work to cook, ours to eat." Then when her husband comes she tells him that so and so, and so and so, have eaten the food and there is only water left in the pot. . . . But when her husband's friends begin to get married they say to their wives; "That woman is really our wife! Listen to her!" And she has honour among the other women, and when they go to fetch firewood she walks with nothing, another carries her axe and head-pad.' This account cannot be taken literally—the first wife in the village does not provide *all* the food for her husband's friends, who still eat at their mothers' homes, nor do they have any sexual rights over her though they call her 'wife', but she must serve them as far as she can.

571 264 ● 578 Sometimes, we were told, men's eating groups last a lifetime, but often friends quarrel or move, and the group breaks up. 'Perhaps one eats at midday and does not summon his friend, but only calls him to the evening meal, then the other, who always calls his friend to the midday meal also, is angry, saying: "He grudges me food", and they separate. They just stop calling each other to eat. Or sometimes one tries to seduce his friend's wife, and on that account they separate.'

264 178 Eating with contemporaries is still considered right and proper by Nyakyusa men, and it is generally practised by pagans, but the old men say that youths are less ready to share food than formerly. 'This custom of eating together is dying.' Certainly in Christian villages the practice has declined markedly. Many unmarried Christians eat with their friends, but the majority of the married men eat at home alone. Out of eight married men living in Rungwe, for example, only two ate together regularly, and the most educated group, the clerks, are notorious in the district for their eating habits. 'People are much shocked at the clerks for eating food alone. They say they are proud.'

264 574 Apart from eating regularly with certain close friends, well-to-do pagan men are expected to entertain generously, inviting fellow villagers to drink beer, or to a 'dinner party'—an ample meal with delicious dishes, very carefully served—from time to

845 to bring all the herds of the village for treatment. The father of
these twins explained that neighbours would suffer less than
783 relatives, if left untreated, but 'their legs would ache a little
621 *because we eat with them*'. And here we come to an idea which
appears in many situations in Nyakyusa life, the idea that con-
[264] tagion is spread through eating together. Relatives of parents of twins are not thought to be in danger until they eat or drink with one of the parents: the ritual is performed so that they may eat together safely. Similarly a murderer and his relatives are thought to be in magical danger from the relatives of the murdered man only if they should eat or drink with them. So too, the bond between neighbours which puts them in danger from the impurity of one of them is the sharing of food.

881 At the initiation and marriage of a girl, neighbours again assist
and identify themselves with the principals. When she reaches
621 puberty a girl is secluded, and her companions in the village—the girls who are her immediate juniors, for the older ones will have joined their husbands—keep her company. Some are her own younger sisters and half-sisters, others are not related at all. Should one girl of the village not join them she is not accused of witchcraft, but it is unusual for one to stay away; to do so would show 'pride' (*amatingo*). These companions (*abapanji*) sleep and eat with the 'bride' (*unsungu*)[1] and share her tasks and lessons, fetching firewood, making mats, learning songs, and listening to the instruction of 'the mothers'. They and the 'bride' go about together as a group and, accompanied by one or two 'mothers', may visit a 'bride' and her maids in another village, the two
● [571] groups competing in dancing and singing. So keen is the rivalry
that formerly, we were told, the visits sometimes led to fighting between the maids and 'mothers' of each 'bride', particularly when the competing groups came from different chiefdoms. At
the end of the ritual two of the maids accompany the bride to her
[864] husband's house, and spend a few days with her there, sharing
the attentions of her husband at night (*vide infra*, p. 87).

During her seclusion the bride avoids her father, whom she refers to as 'father-in-law', and she avoids also all his contem-

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[1] *Unsungu* means a girl who has reached puberty but has not yet borne a child. She is usually, though not invariably, betrothed, and her 'husband' has a part in the puberty ritual. There is no exact English translation, and we think that 'bride' is the least misleading in this context.

posed action of witches, exercised the right of expelling members 681
thought to be dangerous to it. Nowadays, since a village is no
longer held responsible for the torts of its members, men are not
often banished for theft or adultery, but supposed witches and
sorcerers are still frequently compelled to move.

There is also a great deal of voluntary movement to escape 166
friction in the village. This is commonly expressed in terms of
witchcraft—a family moves to avoid the witchcraft of its neigh- 578
bours; but neighbours are not feared unless there has been a
quarrel. It is when the parties to some dispute have *not* been
reconciled that fear of witchcraft germinates, and illness precipi-
tates a move.

Among ordinary commoners only their immediate neighbours are believed to be dangerous and such men therefore sometimes move only from one village to another of the same chiefdom; but very many move right outside to another chiefdom altogether, preferring to make assurance doubly sure and to put a long distance between themselves and their spiritual persecutors. And in the case of certain men of high social status, such as senior village headmen who are the advisers of the chief, and priests, for whom a wider circle is dangerous, it is held to be essential to leave the chiefdom.

We have argued (*vide supra*, p. 36) that movement from 166
village to village has always occurred among the Nyakyusa but
that it is increasing. The change is almost certainly a symptom of 578
increasing friction within the village. One traditional mechanism 164
of settling disputes—the ordeal—has lapsed, while fear of one's
neighbours' witchcraft continues. It is possible also that the incidence of disease, and hence of suspected witchcraft and sorcery, has increased among the Nyakyusa—tuberculosis and venereal diseases are said to have spread greatly since 1914[1] and, in the opinion of the German missionaries, malaria is much more prevalent at the higher altitudes than it was before 1914; but there

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[1] The incidence of tuberculosis in Rungwe district is now thought to be about sixteen per thousand (C. Wilcocks, *Tuberculosis in Tanganyika Territory*, Government Printer, Dar-es-salaam, 1938). Dr. D. Kerr-Cross, in a list of diseases encountered during ten years' practice in north Nyasaland before 1897 reports that he only saw one case of 'pulmonary tubercular phthisis', but syphilis (which the natives called 'the disease of the Arabs'), was very prevalent. Dr. Kerr-Cross was a missionary doctor who travelled extensively in Nyakyusa country. (See his articles already cited and H. H. Johnston, *British Central Africa*, pp. 473-7.)

166 is another reason also for increasing movement. Formerly, to
●578 move to a strange chiefdom was hazardous—a refugee might be killed, or his wife or cattle seized by the chief; nowadays it is safe.
164 Even to-day a man's status is lower in the village in which he is a stranger than in his home village. The old families of a village, 'the owners of the soil' (*abilema*), are spoken of as *amafumu*, which, in its restricted sense, means village headmen who have 'come out' with the chief, but which is also used more widely for commoners of importance. And in the past, we were told, an individual's security of life and property depended upon the support of his neighbours, the *amafumu*, and a stranger was much less likely to receive this than an 'owner of the soil'. If a chief seized a stranger's wife no one would protest, but if he dared to touch the wife of an 'owner of the soil' the village would rise as one man. Hence the incentive to overcome friction by submission, rather than by moving, was stronger in the old society than it is to-day.[1] It may well become stronger again soon. The present circulation from village to village is possible because men are still scarcer than land in Nyakyusa country, but as the population increases, and the production of crops for sale expands, it is probable that strangers will be less welcome and movement more difficult.

166 To lose a member who has not been expelled is a slur on a village, for the implication is that the man who has moved has
624 suffered from the witchcraft of his neighbours. A good neighbour should persuade a fellow contemplating a voluntary move to stay (*vide infra*, p. 243), and when someone has moved of his own accord (and sometimes even when he has been expelled) his fellows go, after the lapse of a little time, to fetch him back.

'When a man moves from his home chiefdom, his village neighbours there, in the majority of cases, follow him within two months and ceremonially invite him back with a show of force by seizing his belongings and carrying them off home to his old village. They may really like and respect him and if, as is usually the case, he has moved because of sickness, they are most anxious to prove to him that his tacit suspicions are unfounded, they wish to rid themselves of the slur of witchcraft. To invite him back is to express affection for him and so to demonstrate that he could

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[1] cf. the modern tendency for Pondo homesteads to break up. Hunter, op. cit., pp. 15, 39.

166 A man who has been driven out and then fetched back provides
783 a feast for his friends on his return. This feast is essentially
the same as the 'ritual of reconciliation' that takes place when a
wrong-doer begs pardon of his own village or that of his father
(*vide supra*, p. 101). For a private individual only his own village
is concerned, but if the exile happens to be a senior headman then
all the villages of the chiefdom participate. A detailed account of
such a feast, which we attended, is given on pp. 271–4.

In a civilized society social separation overcomes friction in
166 two ways: first, it separates individuals who are personally incompatible,
795 and secondly, it provides the individual who is a
misfit in one group with a choice of groups whose values may be
578 more compatible with his own than those of the group from which
he came.[1] In Nyakyusa society villages were formerly all of the
same type, with virtually identical group values, therefore the
individual only escaped from personal incompatibilities by moving.
In the modern society, however, there is a variation of type
as between pagan and Christian villages and, among the Christians,
as between the several denominations. The convert in a
pagan village often moves to a Christian village finding that more
compatible, and the son of a Christian, having abandoned Christianity
and perhaps married several wives, leaves the Christian
village in which he grew up and joins a pagan one with whose
members he has more in common.

The Nyakyusa, in their rationalizations about witchcraft,
578 recognize the fact that friction is often personal and may be overcome
166 by moving. Constantly villages receive individuals who
have been driven out of some other village for practising witchcraft,
754 and when we inquired whether a man who had once been
accused was not feared as a neighbour, the reply was always in
the same tenor as that of Mwamunda: 'Perhaps he has bewitched
his fellows there, we do not know, but he has not bewitched us.'
There is also the implication that quarrels may be forgotten after
a temporary separation, since those who have moved because
they feared witchcraft, and even some who have been accused
of practising witchcraft, are welcomed back.

578 When our informants discussed moving and returning to the
home village they always emphasized friction with one's fellows
166 (*abanine*) as providing the chief impetus to move, and the desire

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[1] cf. G. and M. Wilson, op. cit., pp. 60–1.

to rejoin the group in which he is 'known', in which he has 578
'friends with whom he herded cattle as a boy', as that which 166
provides the chief impetus to return. Never once did an informant suggest friction with the village headman as the reason for moving[1] or loyalty to a former headman as the reason for returning. The Nyakyusa village is in no way the personal following of a headman, as the villages of some other central African peoples (such as the Bemba,[2] Yao, and Ngoni[3]) appear to be. It is essentially a group of equals, established before adolescence, whose stability and continuity turn on friendship and co-operation between its members. It is already a corporate group, with very close bonds forged through years between its members, before the permanent leader is chosen, and it continues as a group though its leader dies or moves.

We do not deny that the personality of the village headman— 622
particularly his generosity and his skill in settling disputes 621
between his men—affects the stability and growth of the village;
some villages increase noticeably in size after the 'coming out', 166
while others shrink, and headmen (like chiefs) use medicines to attract men to them; but the Nyakyusa themselves imply that it is the character of the villagers rather than the character of the headman which determines movement to and from the village.

The headman, like any private individual in the village, must 622
remain on good terms with the other members lest *he* be driven
out. A number of cases were cited in which headmen had moved 626
because they had become unpopular with their men and feared their 'breath' or witchcraft (*vide* pp. 204–8; 268–70) but most of them had returned after the lapse of a little time.

What private individuals and headmen alike fear is not a quarrel with one individual, but the disapproval of the village or village-section as a whole; for 'the breath of men' is but the crystallization of adverse public opinion. The man who has the support of his fellows in a dispute with one neighbour is shielded in 'the war by night'.

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[1] Personal friction with a chief occurs (*vide* pp. 191–2).

[2] A. I. Richards, *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia*, pp. 110 ff.

[3] M. Gluckman, J. C. Mitchell, and J. A. Barnes, 'The Village Headman in British Central Africa', *Africa*, Vol. XIX (1949), pp. 91, 98, 100.

course and sharing of food and beer between fathers and sons. 577 *Ukwangala* implies eating and drinking together frequently, and 621 cannot be fully enjoyed by people who do not live close to one another.

The value of good fellowship with equals is constantly talked 577 about by the Nyakyusa, and it is dinned into boys from childhood that enjoyment and morality alike consist in eating and 869 drinking, in talking and learning, in the company of contemporaries. The solitary and aloof, those who enjoy the company of women (as opposed to direct sexual satisfaction) and those who seek intimacy with members of another generation, are derided.

Now this very emphasis on the value of good fellowship with 577 equals is doubtless a reflection of the difficulty of achieving it. The frequent accusations of witchcraft and movement from one 578 village to another are evidence of friction between fellow villagers. Does the friction turn on the age-village organization?

d. The incidence of accusations of witchcraft

As we have seen, witchcraft is believed to operate primarily 578 within the village, and the typical accusation is against a neighbour.[1] But in other societies also witchcraft accusations are most 754 commonly made against those with whom one is living, and in close daily contact: in Pondoland it is members of the same homestead or of neighbouring homesteads who suspect one another of witchcraft; among Xhosa-speaking people in towns it is fellow employees, or fellow schoolmates; among the Azande it is members of the same small neighbourhood. Therefore it is not only the Nyakyusa who accuse village neighbours of witchcraft.

Of the *frequency* of accusation in different societies we can 754 make no comparison, for statistics on witchcraft are extremely difficult to collect. Few field-workers could be certain that they were cognizant of *every* accusation of witchcraft within a given

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[1] Over a third of the accusations of witchcraft recorded were against neighbours, as distinct from spouses or co-wives or kinsmen and, if one excludes the modern type of accusation against fellow workers in the same camp, the proportion of accusations against neighbours is almost one half. The thirty-eight witchcraft accusations cannot, of course, be taken as a random sample in the technical sense; we recorded every case that came to our ears, but cannot be certain that inquiries brought to light every accusation in the villages investigated. Nevertheless the preponderance of accusations against neighbours is significant (*vide* Document, pp. 198 ff.).

754 area, during a given period, so we cannot either assert or deny
that accusations of witchcraft are more frequent in age-villages
than in kinship villages.

●578 There are two sets of loyalties in Nyakyusa society: those to a
kinship group and those to an age-village. Does conflict arise
621 from a clash between them? We have no evidence that it does.
It is true that kin may support a sick relative against his age-
602 group, referring to his illness as due to witchcraft, whereas
neighbours will attribute it to his own sin and their legitimate
anger; but very often the ancestors and the 'defenders' are
believed to work together to punish wrong-doers—those who
break avoidance and incest taboos, those who insult seniors, those
who neglect traditional rituals (*vide supra*, p. 122). Amity between
relatives is sanctioned by neighbours as well as by senior kins-
men, and the importance of enjoying the company of village
mates is constantly stressed by relatives. Where a village does
appear to support a member against his kin, it is usually on
the side of the ancestors and 'justice', in terms of the Nyakyusa
code, as when neighbours share a father's anger at the insolence
of his son, or after his death protect his son against unjust treat-
ment by the heir. The values of village solidarity and of kinship
solidarity are thus coherent.

e. *The form of witch beliefs*

621 There is, however, a connection between the age-village
754 organization and the *form* of witch beliefs. As we have seen, great
emphasis is laid on feasting neighbours, and it is believed that
626 the impulse to witchcraft comes from the lust for milk and meat.
The Nyakyusa argue thus: witchcraft comes from neighbours,
and neighbours must be fed or they get angry; feeding a witch on
milk or beef pacifies him (*vide supra*, p. 92). An explicit connection is made between neglecting to provide feasts on the proper occasions and suffering from 'the breath' of justly angry neighbours whose blighting power springs from the same root as witchcraft. The contrast with the witch beliefs of the Pondo is marked: among them it is held that the drive to witchcraft is sex lust, and all witches have familiars with whom they have sex relations.[1]

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[1] Hunter, op. cit., pp. 275–88.

The Nyakyusa emphasis upon lust for food as the incentive to 578
crime is not due to starvation, for they are among the best-fed people in Africa, with a much greater variety and quantity of food 621
at their disposal than the Pondo. Why, then, this emphasis in their 754
witch beliefs? We suggest that it is directly connected with living with non-relatives who have no share in one's inheritance. The most prized possession of the Nyakyusa is cattle, and cattle are controlled by lineages. Neighbours who are not kinsmen, and who cannot hope to benefit by inheritance or through assistance with marriage and funeral cattle from a fellow's herd, are more likely to be jealous of his wealth in cattle than are his brothers and sons who directly share in it through inheritance, and the gift of cattle at marriage and death. The only profit which neighbours derive from the herd of a rich fellow is the milk and meat on which he feasts them. Jealousy of another's wealth is a common enough cause for supposed witchcraft, but the affront of inequality is greater when it is constantly before one's eyes. Nyakyusa live close-packed in villages and can hardly be unaware of what next-door neighbours eat. The statement that the pythons of witches are roused by the *smell* of meat cooking and the *smell* of milk (*vide supra*, p. 92) suggests the envy of a poor neighbour when he smells the roast beef and curds next door. Where the local group consists of a lineage (as among the Pondo) people are not necessarily aware of what non-relatives eat. Among the Pondo the pressure to kill cattle for meat comes from within the lineage, and is associated not with the witches but with the ancestors. Sickness is commonly attributed to the *hunger* of the ancestors (*balambile*), who 'want to eat by means of him' who is ill (*bafuna ukudla ngaye*),[1] a notion quite strange to the Nyakyusa.

In short, we argue that it is because people who do not benefit 800
from each other's herds by inheritance and the provision of marriage and funeral cattle, live close to one another, that so much emphasis is laid on the lust for milk and meat as the drive to witchcraft among the Nyakyusa.

And why the Pondo emphasis on sex? Are they more inhibited than the Nyakyusa? At first sight the Pondon sex code seems a freer one than that of the Nyakyusa. The marriage age of men is no later than among the Nyakyusa, while the marriage age of girls is considerably higher, and unmarried men are free to

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[1] Hunter, op. cit., pp. 212, 245.

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[p.199]

MISFORTUNES ATTRIBUTED TO MYSTICAL CAUSES—contd.

(a) Witchcraft—contd.

No.	Category of supposed victim	Category of accused	Category of accuser	Spatial relationship of victim and accused	Charge	Grounds of suspicion	Investigation	Upshot of case	Structural relationship of accuser and accused
6	Young men	Village neighbour, Kagesya's son	Victims	Same village	Prevented road on which they were working being completed quickly			Accused driven out	Village neighbours
7	Village cows	Man of the village	Village neighbours (public accusation made)	Same village	Bewitched cows	Decline in milk supply	*Mwafi* ordeal. Accused did not vomit	Accused driven out	Village neighbours
8	Child	Man, neighbour of victim's father	Father of deceased	Same village	Killed child by witchcraft	Death of child. Accused did not attempt to persuade father of victim to remain, when he was packing to go after victim's death.	Autopsy on victim. *Mwafi* ordeal. Accused did not vomit	Accused driven out Chief seized his cattle	Village neighbours
9	Child of visitor	Host	Village neighbours	Same homestead	Made child ill	Child very ill with ear-ache. Host angry because visitor feasted neighbours. Child worse after such a feast. Host did not express good wishes for recovery (cf. p. 110 ff).	Discussion before assistant headman and village headman	Accused driven out of village	Village neighbours
10	Child	Man, neighbours of victim's father	Victim's father	Same village	Killed child by witchcraft	Father of victim wanted an unreasonable amount of land. Given one field when he joined the village. Wanted another which was refused him by the villagers	None known		Village neighbours

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[p.200]

MISFORTUNES ATTRIBUTED TO MYSTICAL CAUSES—contd.

(*a*) *Witchcraft—contd.*

No.	Category of supposed victim	Category of accused	Category of accuser	Spatial relationship of victim and accused	Charge	Grounds of suspicion	Investigation	Upshot of case	Structural relationship of accuser and accused
11	Man	3 neighbours (men)	Victim (before his death)	Same village	Speared victim internally (by witchcraft)	Illness and death of victim. He dreamed before his death that 3 neighbours (whom he recognized) had speared him	Autopsy. Internal 'wounds' found	No case made. Agreed by village that 'friends' he saw were responsible, but their names were not made public	Village neighbours
12	(a) Cows (b) Child	Neighbour of child's father	Victim's father	Same village	Bewitched cows killed child	Death of child. Accused boasted of his witchcraft	?	Accused driven out	Village neighbours
13	Two men	Neighbour (a man, Kimbila)	Victims	Same village	'He had destroyed their potency' by witchcraft	?	?	?	Village neighbours
14	?	Christian elder	Pagan fellow villagers	Same village	?	'Proud'. 'Does not look at people when he greets them.' Built a very big house in a pagan village	?	?	Village neighbours
15	X Labourer on the Lupa gold-fields	Fellow labourer (a Christian) William	Victim	Same camp	Had injured X's eyes by witchcraft	X had eye trouble. William was seen in a dream by a third labourer. William had recently found gold	Meeting of all the workers	William driven away from the camp	Fellow employees

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MISFORTUNES ATTRIBUTED TO MYSTICAL CAUSES—contd.

(a) *Witchcraft—contd.*

No.	Category of supposed victim	Category of accused	Category of accuser	Spatial relationship of victim and accused	Charge	Grounds of suspicion	Investigation	Upshot of case	Structural relationship of accuser and accused
16	Young man, labourer in Lupa gold-fields	Fellow labourers		Same camp	'They stamped on his belly' (a kind of witchcraft)	Alleged that he ate their rations by means of witchcraft. Illness while at work and finally death after returning home	Divination (twice)		Fellow employees
17	Clerk A	Fellows in work camp, especially fellow clerk B	His friends	Same camp	A made ill by *malila* (a form of witchcraft)	A had replaced B as interpreter and B was jealous. A was greedy when eating with his fellows. Illness began when he choked over a piece of food. He was eating with his fellows	None		Fellow employees
18	Labourer on Lupa gold-fields	Fellow labourers	European employer (sic)	Same camp	Fellow workers had 'eaten' him	Sudden death of labourer. He was lucky in finding gold and his employer's favourite	None	Fellows agreed that one of them had 'eaten' the victim but culprit not found	Fellow employees
19	Labourer on Lupa gold-fields	Fellow labourers	?	Same camp	Fellow workers bewitched him	Died morning after he had received 100s. in prize-money from his employer (cf. pp. 229–30).	?	?	Fellow employees

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MISFORTUNES ATTRIBUTED TO MYSTICAL CAUSES—contd.

(a) *Witchcraft—contd.*

No.	Category of supposed victim	Category of accused	Category of accuser	Spatial relationship of victim and accused	Charge	Grounds of suspicion	Investigation	Upshot of case	Structural relationship of accuser and accused
20	Headboy of European employer on Lupa gold-fields	Fellow employees. Individual not named but cook hinted at	Victim	Same camp	'People' had bewitched him	Acute illness of victim after sleeping with concubine of his European employer. This woman was given in charge of the cook when the European visited other Europeans, but she and the headboy were lovers. Victim and cook hated one another on account of this woman. Victim hated by his fellow employees because he was headboy and looked after everything during his employer's absence	A doctor gave victim medicine which would enable him to see the witches in dreams. He saw two men who hated him, and employer's concubine carrying a knife	Slow recovery of victim. He told the dream to his lover	Fellow employees
21	Nyakyusa employer of 31 men on Lupa gold-fields	Employees	Victim	Same camp	Employees had 'speared him' (with witchcraft)	Acute stomach pain. Weakness. 'He had been angry with his men.'	Divination	Victim recovered	Employer/employee
22	Village headman working as a labourer on Lupa gold-fields	Fellow labourers	?	Same camp	Fellow labourers killed him by witchcraft because he darkened their eyes so that they should not find gold. He himself was a witch.	Sudden death of headman a week after he began work. Gold was scarce and he alone had found some, earning 10s. prize money	?		Fellow employees

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(a) Witchcraft—contd.

MISFORTUNES ATTRIBUTED TO MYSTICAL CAUSES—contd.

No.	Category of supposed victim	Category of accused	Category of accuser	Spatial relationship of victim and accused	Charge	Grounds of suspicion	Investigation	Upshot of case	Structural relationship of accuser and accused
23	Husband	2 wives (not favourites)	Victim	Same homestead	Wives summoned the witches to 'eat' him. Opened the door for them. One herself was a witch	Illness of husband. Wives jealous of chief wife who was the favourite	Divination	Treatment with medicine. Divorce impossible because one suspect a sister of the favourite wife	Spouses
24	Husband	Wife	?	Same homestead	Caused illness in husband	'*He hated her and he fell ill.*'	Divination		*Spouses*
25	Husband	Wife	?	Same homestead	'Eaten' husband	Death of husband	?		Spouses
26	Co-wives	Wife (Kajonga)	Husband (first)	Same homestead	'*Bewitched loins of co-wives*'	Husband did not sleep well with other wives	?	Divorced for witchcraft	Spouses
27	?	Wife (Kajonga)	Husband (second)	Same homestead	?	?	?	Divorced for witchcraft	Spouses
28	Husband's cows	Wife	Husband	Same homestead	Bewitched husband's cows	Cows gave little milk when wife at home, much when wife away	*Mwafi* ordeal. Wife vomited	Husband paid a cow and a bull to his in-laws	Spouses
29	Adulterer	Husband of woman seduced				Adulterer began to squint after he had run off with the woman			Husband/wife's lover

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MISFORTUNES ATTRIBUTED TO MYSTICAL CAUSES—*contd.*

(*a*) *Witchcraft—contd.*

No.	Category of supposed victim	Category of accused	Category of accuser	Spatial relationship of victim and accused	Charge	Grounds of suspicion	Investigation	Upshot of case	Structural relationship of accuser and accused
30	Adulterer	Husband of woman seduced (no. 29)				Adulterer was very ill with a poisoned hand. Husband of his lover had been previously accused	Divination		Husband/wife's lover
31	Senior half-brother (different mother)	Junior half-brother	Victim	?			*Mwafi* ordeal. Junior brother vomited	Junior brother judged innocent	Half-brothers
32	Father (pater and genitor)	Middle son (Mwalyabo)	Brothers (half?)	?	Killed father	Death of father	*Mwafi* ordeal	Accused driven out of chiefdom. He became rich and brothers later made friends with him. They said '*Mwafi* had been mistaken'	Brothers (half?)
33	Child	Father of child an assistant headman	Village headman	Same homestead	Made child ill	Child ill. Father did not report illness to village headman	?	Accused driven out of village	Village headman/assistant headman
34	Chief's child	Village headman (Mwaseila)	People of the chiefdom	Same chiefdom	Caused child to have sore eyes	Mwaseila had gone to the chief alone and said 'witches are eating the child'. He would have gone with other village headmen, had he been innocent	*Mwafi* ordeal	Child took Mwaseila's 4 cows. He was driven out for one year	People of chiefdom and village headman

(a) *Witchcraft—contd.*

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No.	Category of supposed victim	Category of accused	Category of accuser	Spatial relationship of victim and accused	Charge	Grounds of suspicion	Investigation	Upshot of case	Structural relationship of accuser and accused
35	Chief	'People of the north'	?	Same chiefdom		Chief sick	?	Said that chief and his followers fought and defeated the attackers in dreams	Chief/People
36	Chief?	Rich man owning 20 head of cattle (Mwaisumo)	Chief	Same chiefdom		Chief 'did not sleep'	*Mwafi* ordeal. Mwaisumo did not vomit	Chief seized all Mwaisumo's cattle. Neighbours seized his crops. He moved with his wives to another country	Chief/rich commoner
37	Anthropologist	A man who had been refused 1s. when he asked for it as a present	Servants and friends of victim. (Nyakyusa)	Same neighbourhood	Caused attack of malaria (by witchcraft)	Attack of malaria day following refusal of present. Accused did not come to inquire for victim as others did.	None	None	European/African
38	Anthropologist	'The witches' individual not specified	Servants and friends of victim. (Nyakyusa)	Same village	Prevented normal recovery from malaria	Prolonged attacks of malaria, not cured by ordinary treatment. 'It was not just malaria—see you drank much medicine for malaria, but still did not recover.'	None	Formal welcome by wife of chief who lived in village on anthropologist's return, and apology for the illness	European/African

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(d) *Sorcery* (Ubutege)

MISFORTUNES ATTRIBUTED TO MYSTICAL CAUSES—contd.

No.	Category of victim	Category of accused	Category of accuser	Social relationship of victim and accuser	Charge	Grounds of suspicion	Investigation	Upshot of case
1	Chief	'People'	Chief and one of his village headmen	Other chiefdoms	Made chief ill	Envy of chief having a court. Illness of chief.		
2	Conquered chief	Conquering chief (pre-European)		Different villages but same country (after the conquest)	Conquered had killed conqueror by sorcery	[illegible] had taken [illegible] country. Death of conqueror		
3	Christian who became very popular by feeding men. People said he would 'kill' the position of the accused because of his popularity	Senior village headman X		Same village	X sought medicine to work sorcery against the Christian	X envied popularity of new-comer. He was overheard by neighbours saying he would work sorcery. Serious illness of Christian followed		
4	Child of P.	Classificatory brother of P.	P., father of victim	Different chiefdoms		Quarrel over inheritance of cattle. P's brother claimed cows from him. Case went to court of defendant's chief. Decided in his favour		
5	Man ([illegible]) and his wife	Not specified	Son of deceased ([illegible])			Death of [illegible] and his wife	Autopsy on [illegible]. Found a powder, thought to be ubutege medicine, in his stomach. No autopsy on wife but 'know that she died from the same disease'	Family drank protective medicine
6	3 wives of X. Sister of X. 1 married daughter and another child. Husband of married daughter					All died within a short time of one another. Sorcery spread through autopsies	Autopsies	Family drank medicines provided by a doctor and the illness ceased

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No.	Category of victim	Category of accused	Category of accuser	Special relationship of victim and accuser	Charge	Grounds of suspicion	Investigation	Upshot of case
7	Daughter of A. Son and daughter of A's full brother B	A accused X, his parallel cousin (child of A's father's brother). X accused A	A, father and brother of victims		Use of sorcery against one another	Junior brother's son wanted inheritance divided. Elder brother's son (A) did not. This was followed by illness of victims	Suggested by doctor that trouble due to sorcery or to anger of ancestors over family quarrel	Open discussion of quarrel (*ukusiputa*). Drank medicine against sorcery. Also prayer to ancestors
8	Child of neighbour B	Man X	Neighbour B.	Same village	Sent his leopard to kill the child	Child killed by leopard on day after X had quarrelled with accuser B, saying B's cattle were eating his crops	X asked for ordeal. This refused	X driven out of country by chief. Later returned
9	Foreman and clerk A, very lucky in striking gold and favourite of his employer	Fellow clerk B.		Same camp	B accused of killing A by sorcery	A died suddenly at his house. B was very jealous of A's wealth, and had spoken in secret of his desire to kill A by sorcery, saying 'may he die at his house'		
10	Wife of village headman					Death	Autopsy. Symptoms of sorcery found	
11	Man who had run off with another's wife	Injured husband	Victim	Victim on Lupa. Injured husband in [illegible] (300 miles distant)	Husband blowing medicines at the seducer of his wife (i.e. working sorcery—*ubutege*. The husband's friends might have claimed this as vengeance magic)	Continued illness of victim	Divination by a doctor	Victim treated with medicines. Moved to another house. He finally recovered, but [illegible]

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(e) *Vengeance Magic* (Ulupembe—*the Horn*)

MISFORTUNES ATTRIBUTED TO MYSTICAL CAUSES—contd.

No.	Category of Victim	Category of accused	Category of accuser	Spatial relationship of victim and accuser	Charge	Grounds of suspicion	Investigation	Upshot of case
1	2 brothers M^1 and M^2	A doctor (Makikoje)			Accused used the horn. Did not tell M^1 that he was doing so	Accused said M^1 had stolen his millet. M^1 and M^2 both died	Autopsy revealed death due to 'the horn'	Chief drove accused out of country for not bringing case to court but revenging himself. The doctor had used the horn in his own case
2	1. Seducer of woman 2. Child of seducer's elder brother	Husband of woman seduced (Mwakikuhi)	Relatives of deceased seducer		Accused used the horn. Relatives of victims spoke of deaths as due to sorcery (*Ubatege*)	Victim 1 had eloped with accused's wife. Accused boasted that he had revenged himself. Both victims 1 and 2 died suddenly		Woman returned to husband lest others of the family should die
3	Child of A and children of other wives of A's husband	Co-wife B.	A, mother of victim	Same homestead	B used the horn	A had stolen B's bananas and not admitted it when case was taken first to husband and then to chief. B was dissatisfied. The death of child A and children of other wives followed		A paid B for theft. A and other wives went to horn-doctor and drank medicine. They recovered
4	Man C, and woman X, with whom he had eloped	Man A who inherited the woman X	Man B, brother of deceased C	Different chiefdoms.	A used the horn	C ran off with X, widow of A's elder brother whom A had inherited. C and X both died. A boasted: 'I killed them with the horn'		B speared A and fled to a distant chiefdom (before Europeans came)

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No.	Category of victim	Category of accused	Category of accuser	Spatial relationship of victim and accuser	Charge	Grounds of suspicion	Investigation	Upshot of case
5	9 of A's children	B, son-in-law of A	A, father of victims		B used the horn	A's daughter left B. A returned only 2 head of cattle to B. Owed him 10 to 13 cattle. Told him to collect balance from his daughter's second husband. B summoned A to come before horn doctor. A refused. Told B to sue in court. Within 3 years children of A died		A speared B. He was convicted in District Officer's court of manslaughter
6	Gwatabile, his wife, and his full sister's husband	Man (Itupa)	Family of deceased debtor, Gwatabile		Itupa kindled the horn	Gwatabile had a cow belonging to Itupa. The relationship not known. The three victims died		Family paid a cow to Itupa
7	C	Doctor	C ?			A ran off with B's wife. B followed her and found her in C's house. B claimed damages from A, but A objected saying: 'No, she was found with C'. The court gave judgement against A, and he paid damages to B, then subsequently the court gave judgement for A in his case against C, ordering him to return to A the cows A had paid to B. C delayed, so A went to a doctor and got him to make medicine against C. C handed over the cows to A immediately and paid doctor 6s. to counteract his medicine.	Case brought before D.O.	Doctor discharged. Doubt whether or not doctor should be expelled from the chiefdom in which he lived. Opinion of the Nyakyusa divided on this point

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19. THINGS WHICH ARE SAID TO ANGER THE WITCHES AND MAKE THEM THROTTLE US

Mwaisumo (clerk):

'Carrying very heavy loads, frequently. They (the witches) wonder (*ukukiba*) at a person and he (or she) falls ill.' 754

'Hoeing a very large field, surpassing others.' 626

'Being more wealthy, as by earning money on the Lupa, like Bingibamo and Kiputa.' 578

'Boasting at work, saying: "I am the senior" like Ramsay and Isiah at Tukuyu.'

'Eating fine food alone. This may be meat, when you have killed a bull or cow, or beer or gifts of food from in-laws, or any other fine food. Mwambuputa was accused of doing this.'

'People are always afraid to carry very heavy things because they think that others will be angry and wonder at it (*ukukiba*). Their astonishment causes illness. Women especially speak of this a great deal when they are fetching firewood. If they carry a very big load others express wonder saying: "It is God who has given you strength surpassing us all." This astonishment brings on serious illness. People fall ill and some even die. Formerly people feared very much to speak to someone who carried a heavy load, saying: "You carry a very heavy load"; they were likely to be fined if they did, because the person to whom they said it would complain, saying: "He wondered at me. He brings down illness on me; he brings the witches by saying I am a strong fellow."

'It is like this also in hoeing; if a man has hoed much he fears lest they (the witches) will kill him; if people say: "He has surpassed us in strength" and are angry, that is what happens—the man falls ill and may die.

'Surpassing others in possessions is said also to anger other people, witches, who kill their fellow because they think that he has a medicine (*unkota*) which enables him to surpass them in wealth. The medicine for surpassing others is the medicine of good fortune (*unkota gwa lusako*). There was a case like this among the Nyangomo—the case of a young man who died quite recently. His name was Bingibamo, the son of Kiputa. This young man was in employment on the Lupa gold-fields . . . and he sent back money to his father to buy cattle. When he had been working for a certain European for a short time

754 only he surpassed the other workers as they searched for gold, and found a very big nugget. He saw it first and picked it up immediately. 626 All the others wished to share it; they all went together to their European (employer) to say that their fellow did not find this nugget alone, • 578 but that they had all got it. The employer said: "Yes, of course I shall pay you all for sifting, but he found it. He picked it up. I shall give him something separately." So he gave Bingibamo 100s. and to each of the others he gave 6s. The next morning Bingibamo was ill; the following day he died and they buried him. It is said that his fellows "ate" him, they were angry about the nugget he had got. And those who work there (on the Lupa) regularly say that no one who gets a nugget ever escapes; those who get money always die.

'It is said that one who boasts at work saying that he has surpassed his fellows in wisdom and seniority dies like Ramsay, who was a clerk at Tukuyu, and Isiah Mwagomba. They died. Some say privately that the sin (*inongwa*) which killed them was boasting—they boasted very much to their fellows. Some say that there is one man among them (the clerks at Tukuyu) who always kills his fellows if they seem likely to surpass him in seniority (i.e. importance). A boastful man (*gwalwitufyo*) is always proud (*gwamatingo*), and as for enjoying the company of his fellows he does not keep on good terms with them at all (*atikwangala nabo kanunu*).

'Eating fine food alone is said to kill a man. If you have killed a bull to eat you must give your fellows some, because if you grudge them they will summon the witches to "eat" you. That is to say the people who saw you will tell of it and at night "the defenders" will be angry and summon the witches to "eat" you. Or when your in-laws bring something when they visit you, and you do not call your fellows, but grudge them a share they will "eat" you, as happened in the case of Mwambuputa. It is said that Mwambuputa grudged his fellows certain food, so they were very angry and two of his children died at home. When he found that sickness was spreading at his homestead he fled to the Lake-shore plain (MuNgonde), but there also he found that death pursued him and he returned home again. It is said that sickness pursued him to the plain because he went off without performing the death ritual for the children who died. So when he returned he found two bulls and killed them, saying: "Friends, I have come. I did wrong because I did not perform the ritual for your children with you." '

753 woman has been angry with her husband, and perhaps quarrelled with him, and has sworn at her husband by "the things" (i.e. the sex organs) 626 of his mother, or perhaps his father, the child she bears will fall sick with *ingoto*. It becomes very thin and does not grow. The disease is recognized when a child is very ill from infancy, and it is very thin [787] but does not die. Then they say it is *ingoto*. Sometimes they inquire of a diviner and the diviner reveals that it is ill of *ingoto*.

'I remember a certain woman who was married to a man, Akayamba. This man had married two wives, and she of whom I speak was [578] the third. This woman was very proud (*namatingo fijo*) and was constantly quarrelling with her husband and her co-wives. When she quarrelled with her husband he got angry and beat her. Then she swore at him horribly, about "the things" of his mother or father. She said: "You! So and so of your father! So and so of your mother!"[1] Then this woman bore a girl child and when it had grown a little it became very ill. It was very ill for a whole year. When it began to recover she quarrelled again with her husband and swore at him [787] insultingly, and the child got ill again. So her husband (the father of the child) and she went to inquire of a diviner. The divination revealed *ingoto*. It said: "Your wife has sworn at you about the things of your mother when you were quarrelling." When they got home the husband drove his wife away, saying: "Go to your father!" When she got home the woman told her father everything and he took millet and gave it to her to make beer with which to pay. So she brewed beer and brought it to her husband, saying: "I did wrong, my husband." Her husband called his fellows and they all drank the beer and expressed their anger (*ukwijaja*) and said: "May the child recover and grow well!"

'This happened when I was 13 or 14 years old. The girl (who was ill) is still alive; her body shows signs of not having grown properly.

'The disease comes from "the breath of men" because these insults were made publicly and others heard them. I do not think anything would happen if the insults were private, I am not sure.'

A curse of neighbours for neglect of rituals.
Angombwike (young Christian man).

789 'If I do not do the (death) ritual properly for my father the death of my children is due to the case against me, the dispute with relatives 626 and the curse of people—non-relatives (*nongwa mbukamu, ikigune* 842 *mbandu*).

'Sometimes the villagers (*amafumu*) bind a man's loins so that he cannot beget children with his wife. They are both sterile. Mwakaná-

recurring in a cycle of rituals is likely to have the same significance 121
in each, holds good for the Nyakyusa: certain symbols of shaving, 771
washing, eating, spreading banana leaves, scattering grain, and so forth were similarly interpreted by our informants in the different rituals of the cycle, and their full significance is only apparent when a comparison of their various uses is made. In this book, therefore, attention is focused on the ritual cycle. A comparison of numerous rites reveals a *symbolic pattern*, the counterpart, in the emotional aspect, of kinship organization in the practical aspect; and the comments of the more self-conscious Nyakyusa on the rites indicate the *intellectual system* linked with this pattern.

As already mentioned, the religious conceptions of the Nyakyusa 771
include the belief in medicines, in 'the breath of men', and in witchcraft, as well as in the power of senior relatives. The importance of medicines in the rituals directed to the shades will be evident in every chapter of this book. References to witchcraft and the 'breath of men' are not so frequent, since these form what is on the whole a separate system of beliefs, and refer to a different set of relationships. The ancestor cult is concerned *solely* with the relationships of kinsmen, and of the chiefs and their peoples; witchcraft and 'the breath of men' *mainly* with the relationships of fellow villagers—i.e. age mates and their wives—though it also impinges on kinship and political relationships. Only in the relationship of spouses, and that between chief and village headmen, do the two sets of beliefs constantly overlap. An account of the
Nyakyusa conception of witchcraft and 'the breath of men' has [578]
already been published, and it has been shown that accusations of witchcraft occur most frequently between fellow villagers and, nowadays, between fellow employees, that is, between non-relatives; they are also fairly frequently directed against wives and co-wives; but accusations of witchcraft against kinsmen of the same lineage are very rare.[1] Antagonism between kinsmen occurs and is expressed in accusations of practising sorcery, as well as in fear of the power of senior relatives, but most misfortunes are attributed to the lust and envy of neighbours or wives rather than to the malice of kinsmen. Evil is conceived of as having a personal cause, but as originating generally outside the circle of kin. The mystical power of senior relatives (living and dead) can never be used irresponsibly—it cannot operate unless the cause is just—and therefore misfortune emanating from the shades is always a just

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[1] Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 102–4; 198–205.

602 763 is forgotten he will be angry: 'It happens sometimes that a kinsman comes in later, after the man is buried, and is very angry because no message was sent to him; he comes in a passion, and perhaps he beats his brother [the one who should have sent him a message]. Then the others catch hold of him and say: "Why do you not come soberly and greet us decently with the appropriate words? Come now, why?" And if he does not stop they beat him.'

602 764 These kinsmen and affines, with their wives and children, are under obligation to come to the burial, unless they are sick. Young children under the age of 10 or 11 are not obliged to come, though they often do, but older children must do so. One reason for the continuance of the burial ceremonies for three or four days is that this gives time for relatives from a distance to receive the messages and come. Deliberately to refuse to send a message or, on the
● [578] other side, to refuse to come to a burial for no good reason, is a symbolic breaking of the bond of kinship and no one ever does either, unless there is a serious quarrel and all economic and social relations are being broken off between the two families concerned.

621 764 577 The village neighbours also are obliged to come to every burial in the village. They normally wish to do so, but, even if they do not, they still come for shame or for fear of being accused of witchcraft if they stay away. Where there is friendship the neighbours come in grief and sympathy and quarrels are softened by the fact of death, but, if the memory of enmity still persists, then the last sanctions are shame and fear: 'Some people mourn more than others.' 'The men who knew him say: "Let us go and mourn him."' 'Those who did not know him intimately mourn because each thinks: "He has died, my neighbour, and so will it be with me one day."' 'If I have quarrelled with my neighbour and he dies, I go to his burial for I say to myself: "It is true that while he lived we quarrelled, but now he is dead and we shall never meet again. I too will go to his burial and mourn him."' 'If a village neighbour does not come to a burial we say he is unkindly and unsociable.' 'And if a man does not go to his neighbour's burial then at once people say: "It was you who bewitched him. Why else do you not come to bury him?"' Several of the accusations of witchcraft recorded had been occasioned by a man's absence from a village neighbour's funeral. For it is believed that witches are chary of going to the burials of their victims lest the dead should rise and denounce them.

643 764 A chief normally goes to all burials in his own country, except

to the dancers a heightened sense of their own warlike quality: 764
'We used not actually to fight at burials so much as to dance and 535
become conscious of our strength for future wars against other 721
chiefdoms, when, on another day, we would go to raid their cows.'

But although an actual fight was not a necessary part of the 578
funeral it very frequently occurred; and burials are still one of 764
the most usual occasions of spearing. 'In the old days, before the 721
country was at peace, we men often fought at burials; we ran in 535
front spearing one another, while our wives ran behind calling the war-cry and watching the prowess of their husbands.' So far from
rituals having the sole function of promoting social integration, as [182]
some would have us believe, the burial rites of the Nyakyusa were occasions on which existing antipathies continually found overt expression in fighting and new antipathies arose; but the quarrels were not within the mourning lineage.

The fights normally followed the lines of division between chiefdom and chiefdom, village and village. Kinship and affinity have always for some men extended beyond the single chiefdom; and to the burials of these people, if they are in any way eminent, the young men of other chiefdoms often come to dance. And while today, with a well-established tradition of peace, there are fewer smouldering enmities between chiefdoms, forty or fifty years ago it was scarcely possible for the young men of two chiefs to meet peaceably; cattle-raids, abductions of women, defeats and victories in battle were too hot in the memory. Sometimes an accidental jostling, sometimes a deliberate insult was the occasion for a running fight.

> At burials there was often war. If the men of two chiefdoms were there together at a burial they would quarrel and fight. Sometimes the fight began when one hurled his spear into the ground and then pulled it up so as to pitch earth on to another man. Perhaps there would be only a few men dancing at first and many sitting down; but when a neighbouring chief was heard coming with his men, and the sound of the trumpet and flute[3] came to us, then we said: 'If we sit still they will say there were no men but only women at that burial, let us dance too!' So we would get up and dance, and then if the others did anything there would be war.

And fights sometimes occurred between two villages of the same chief.

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[3] The trumpet of horn and the bamboo flute which used to accompany the war-dance. They are now seldom heard; drums have superseded them.

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584 One of the women of the groom's party then fetched two banana leaves, one of sweet banana and one of plantain, and put them down in Kyobwe's hut. Meantime the mother of the groom changed the bride's belt and the bark-cloth worn between the legs, dressing her in new ones, and burying the old cloth, soiled by first menstruation, in a bundle of dry banana leaves. These she placed on top of the fresh leaves already mentioned, covered the pile with a small rough mat, and sprinkled it with powdered medicine. The bride knelt on the mat and, with head bent, ate roast bananas also sprinkled with the powdered medicine, which her mother-in-law handed to her. Her young brother who had washed with her also shared the bananas. After this the bride is free to wash, but not yet to oil herself.

The groom's mothers were feasted on meat and bananas—two large and two small basketfuls—and returned home. The atmosphere all through the ritual was one of rejoicing, and it was markedly a women's affair. The chief and several other men were present but, apart from his scolding of the women for not bringing a bull, the chief played no part at all.

[431] According to strict custom the groom's mothers should have come a second time with gifts of food (*ukusumbulela*)[1] to cement the friendship, but since the groom was in a hurry to get to work on the Lupa gold-fields this act was omitted. 'They brought the two lots of food together,' we were told, 'some of the milk and bananas were for the *ukwingeria* and some for the *ukusumbulela*.'

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535 Three weeks later (June 14) the groom, with his go-between and other friends, brought the main body of marriage-cattle (*ukukwe*), and they danced the stamping dance (*ukukanya ngonya*) in the bride's father's courtyard and on the litter of the seclusion hut, brandishing their spears as they stamped to the war rhythm. The bride's companions and mothers danced in a separate group, one mother carrying the bride on her shoulders. A lavish feast of cooked food was set before the groom and his friends, and they in their turn scattered pieces of meat and cents which the bride's
●[578] maids and 'mothers' scrambled for. Meantime a quarrel broke out between the bride's father and her brothers over the distribution of the marriage-cattle.

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584 Six weeks after the *ukwingeria* (July 29) the bride, accompanied by two of her father's wives, two of her maids, and a third girl invited because she was a good singer, went to wash ritually again

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[1] *Ukusumbulela*: to give a present for the first time to a new friend.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Lugulu

851 brothers he will call if they are near) and they come with a bull. They arrive at nightfall.

The girl's parents meanwhile have called all their relatives (but it does not matter if some relatives do not come; it brings them no trouble) and friends of the age-village, and the boys come too. And they shut the door fast and start drinking the beer. 'They have come, they have come, let us close the door', they say. Then the go-between outside calls to us: 'We have come,' but we are silent. We answer never a word. At last we answer and ask: 'What have you brought?' And he answers: 'A bull.'

'What-sized bull?' 'A little bull.' 'He! What do you mean by bringing a little bull only?' 'Well, it's a nice big bull!'

851 Then they come and bang on the door and we hold it shut and they
•578 bang, and bang, and then we begin insulting one another. We accuse
them of filthiness, saying: 'They defaecate, they urinate!' And of incest,
saying: 'You have intercourse with your mother'; and of foolishness,
[514] and they accuse us likewise. At last they burst in and the insults continue inside. They actually defaecate in the house.[1]

851 But soon we call out: 'They have entered, let us make peace, friends,' and we all sit down. Then I (the father of the girl) call on the go-between, and he sits down opposite us. I and my wife, the girl's mother, sit by the fire. Then I ask him: 'What have you brought?' 'I have brought a bull!' 'Oh! Eh!' 'I am hungry, give me some food.'

Then we discuss this for a time and agree, and we give them the food to eat and some beer. They eat, the young men snatching food over there, and our young men here, and we, the elders, eating sedately at the back.

851 Then, when they have eaten, we begin to insult one another again
578 over the cattle that have been paid, the laziness and slovenliness of the bride, the dirty cooking of her mother. They scold us and we scold them. Then after a time, with insults flying, and the young men stamping and stamping, we call out: 'Silence, silence,' and the noise subsides.

851 Then our son-in-law comes to the fire at the summons of the go-between, who says: 'Praise your father,' and he says: 'You of so-and-so, son of so-and-so (he mentions all my names), our true father.' Then the go-between says: 'Praise your mother!' and he praises her: 'You, so-and-so, daughter of so-and-so, our true mother!' and he goes back and sits down. Then the bride is called by the go-between and she is made to praise first her father and then her mother. And if there is any man who eloped with the bride from her husband's, but she later returned to her husband, the lover comes too. He fears to go blind

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[1] Angombwike confirmed this asking, when the rite was mentioned, whether we had been told these details.

ritual, though not openly admitted. The younger brother pro- 783
tested at the inclusion of the cactus stems and it is likely that they 784
were an ingredient intended to injure the sender of sorcery.

(*d*) *Prayer to the shades*

Misfortune is also believed to come from the anger of senior 578
relatives, living and dead. If a junior has angered his senior kins- 775
man the senior is said to 'mutter over the fire'. 'He is so angry 754
that he cannot speak intelligible words, he murmurs and mumbles
to himself. . . .' 'I crouch over the fire in the evening and mutter
to myself in a low voice: "I am astonished and hurt at my son.
Did I not provide marriage-cattle for him? And he does this to
me!" ' Then the shades hear him and the wrong-doer falls ill, or
is sterile, or his crops or fishing fail. 'No man has the power of
making the shades hear like this save Father (*tata*)—he mutters
alone and the shades hear him—all of us, pagans and Christians
alike, believe in the power of Father to mutter, because whenever
a man wrongs his father something always happens to him—he
finds blessing nowhere.' The 'father' is a man's own father who
begot him, or his heir, or, in a lesser degree, his father's elder full
brother, or any kinsman who has given marriage-cattle on his
behalf. 'If a man has given me cattle for marriage then he has
authority over me (*jo mpala gwangu*)[1] for cattle are important
(*imbala*).'

If a senior is at fault (for example, an heir who neglects his wards) the shades may, in theory, punish him also, but more often any misfortune that befalls him is attributed to the just wrath of his neighbours who watch over the interests of the dead man's children. The idea that misfortunes spring from the anger of the living is strong; indeed, one of our best informants, Angombwike, maintained that 'the shades never act alone', and Mwakwelebeja, an old man, said: 'It is really we who get angry, but the shades help a little because they are always with us; we always dream of them.'

The shades are 'the fathers' (*batata*), and prayers are addressed 776
primarily to the men of the lineage, but a father's sister is also 782
classed as a 'father'. Some informants denied that a mother could
bring sickness on her children:

> Women never murmur against their children, only the father, the 754 775

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[1] Literally, 'he is my great one'.

754 775 man. Women murmur but it only makes them sick themselves [laughter]. But my father's sister (*unnasenga*) can murmur, she is a man like my father. . . . If my mother is old and I do not care for her she will murmur and fall sick herself, she will never make me sick. My mother is no relative in my homestead, she is no relative to the shades.

However, Mwakwelebeja (a very old and conservative man) held that 'People sometimes say: "My mother beneath is angry" though it's not common', and Kasitile was quite positive that a mother was also a shade with power to inflict misfortune, as the following conversation shows:

QUESTION: What shades influence a man or woman?

KASITILE AND HIS YOUNGEST WIFE: *Iminda* of father is there, and *iminda* of mother. Yes, indeed, *iminda* of mother exists. Once I had not put beer in the house and I fell ill. The divination said: 'It is *iminda* of your mother. She is angry not to find anything in your house.' Because we chiefs always put beer in a little calabash in the house, it stays there always.

QUESTION: When it goes bad?

KASITILE: We put some more. There is a little millet flour there now. Sometimes we put flour, sometimes beer. And when I come to die they bury beer with me. . . . Once the offering was not there, and my mother who was dead came to look and did not find anything. Then she went to father, who was dead, and said: 'I went to our child. His house was without anything.' Then father said: 'Let us go and look!' They did not find anything, then they shook me up. Then the oracle said: 'It is the *iminda* of your mother.'

QUESTION: And a wife?

KASITILE: Both her father and her mother punish [lit. hit] her at their place, even though she is with me, also they punish her.

QUESTION: But your shades?

KASITILE: How can they punish in-laws? They do not punish her, but the child whom she has borne, their grandchild, him they punish.

[593] Though Kasitile and others denied that the husband's shades could punish a wife, nevertheless she suffers from their anger through the child, through a difficult labour, or through the beer she brews going bad.

578 775 PYAGILAMO: It is said that when a woman who has quarrelled with her husband is brewing beer and it goes bad, that means the shades are angry. The shades of the husband have made the beer go bad. The husband has murmured and the shades have heard. When a wife is [845] pregnant it is taboo for her to quarrel with her husband; she will have a difficult labour. The husband murmurs and the shades hear. The

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difficult labour is from this, not from adultery. And in a case of difficult 775
labour her husband does pray to his shades.
[3+5]

All were agreed that a woman is in the power of the shades of 775
her father's lineage and if her father is angry with her, or with his 578
son-in-law her husband, his shades afflict her, causing her to be 613
barren or to have miscarriages, or ailing children. Hence a woman who is barren or ill, or whose children are sickly, often returns to her father's homestead so that he may pray for her, and she sleeps there on the night of the ritual, for the shades come by night. More rarely, if she has quarrelled with her father, she goes outside her husband's homestead and, facing towards her father's home, she prays herself on the pathway. But in all the cases we traced in which a woman's ancestors were believed to have made her, or her child, ill, there was a dispute between her father (or his heir) and her husband over marriage-cattle or the bull of puberty; and we were told that her father's shades 'are angry only if marriage-cattle have not been paid, and for no other reason', thus it seems that the control of her father's shades over a married woman is in fact somewhat limited.

The characteristic illness sent by the shades is sores round the 753
mouth, and fever—an illness which is not acute and clears up 775
quickly. These symptoms are immediately interpreted as *imiadu*, 777
affliction from the shades. Beer going sour before it is mature is also *imiadu*, usually thought to be caused by quarrels between husband and wife. But almost any misfortune, mild or serious, is interpreted as *imiadu* if members of the lineage are conscious of quarrels between themselves, or with their spouses or fathers-in-law.

The ritual consists in the reconciliation of the living in the 783
presence of the dead and, if the misfortune is serious, a sacrifice of flesh, fish, or fowl. The junior begs pardon of his senior who acknowledges his anger and expresses forgiveness by taking a mouthful of water from his calabash cup (*alupindi*) and blowing it out (*ukuipula*) in his sacred banana grove. For the patient to recover, or the blight on crops or fish-traps to be removed, *the senior kinsman must confess his anger*, and spitting, or blowing out water, is a symbol of confession and forgiveness. Mwaisumo was explicit on the matter: 'If a father is angry with his son or daughter he may say, some day: "I forgive you now" and spit on the ground: all the anger that is in him comes out like spit.' *Ukusuwa* means both 'to

in the banana grove. No one eats any. Then in the morning the children 783
go there and eat. Are they not the comrades of the shades? But for us grown people it is taboo. We eat later on. That is the old custom. And formerly no one dried the fish which first entered the trap. They cooked and ate them in the house with the children. . . . If they put them to dry in the sun the shades were angry, saying: 'Where are the fish we gave you? We do not see them in the house.'

Kasitile: Sometimes it is her father's anger which prevents a girl 842
from becoming pregnant. Perhaps she runs off with men repeatedly, 578
then her father is angry with her. He says: 'She is squandering my cattle.' He complains (*ikwibunesya*) with his wives at the hearth and calls to mind his fathers, the shades. Then the girl does not conceive.

If later on the father forgives her, he sends a messenger to her hus- 783
band, saying: 'Send me your wife, let her come and we will pray.' 842
Then, after calling his fellows and killing a bull, he takes meat from the top of the foreleg (*mmapa*) and cuts it into pieces and puts a piece into the mouth of the girl, and she eats. They say that it is to drive the shades from the body of the girl, the shades who have caught hold of her fecundity. Some of the meat from the *mmapa* is thrown down, and the children pick it up and eat it. It is taboo for others to take and eat it.

Fibombe (a Christian elder): Perhaps your father has died and people 842
have come to marry your sister; and perhaps the sister of your father 578
(*unyokosenga*) claims one cow, saying: 'I am your father, give me one.' 783
If you grudge it, then there is much murmuring which is heard by the shades, by your brother and your father who died. And so if your sister does not conceive people say: 'They grudged the father's sister, the shades are angry.' Then you seek a fowl and beer, and send them to your father's sister, and she puts the fowl under her bed that the shades may know it. She speaks, saying: 'Indeed I was angry.' The shades hear. That fowl opens the door; she knows that the cow is near, it is coming. She confesses everything (*ikusesya syosa*) on receiving the fowl; this she speaks in her house. You go later with the cow to bring your sister to your father's sister. Then if the girl bears at her husband's everyone says: 'Indeed it was so.'

And if your sister has run off with a man and you are angry, the shades hear. You say: 'I do not know if she will conceive there.' Then she does not bear and people say: 'Let her take her husband to her brother.' If the husband is rich perhaps he seeks two cows and a bull calf, but the cows for bringing back are not sent first, a hen is sent first with a message, saying: 'I come on such and such a day.' The hen is put under the bed. The shades know about it. I, the brother, who was angry, pray, and she bears a child. But this does not happen among Christians; there is nothing of it.

764 One minor quarrel occurred at a funeral we attended. Kasitile
578 was given only a little meat and he complained, saying: 'Why do
783 you give me a leg, I the owner of the funeral?' He took umbrage and left the funeral with his wives. Then they went to his home to say: 'We are in the wrong, we made a mistake in dividing.' Then Kasitile was satisfied and prayed over a medicine (*akota*) which they cooked to eat. If he did not pray the medicine would go bad and would not cook. He said in his prayer: 'I have no case against them, let the medicine cook, the young men just played with the meat, it is not a serious case, may the medicine cook at once.'

(*e*) *Reconciliation*

828 A distinction is made by the Nyakyusa between misfortune due
783 to the anger of senior relatives and that due to the anger of neighbours,[1] and the rituals performed are theoretically distinct, though in practice they merge into one another.

578 A man fears the anger of his fellow villagers who murmur
783 against him when he has offended them, and whose cold breath is believed to fall upon him and chill him with fever or cause a paralysis. Mature men or women fear only the anger of their own neighbours, but a young man and his wife also fear their parents' neighbours. The ritual performed to lift the curse of neighbours consists in acknowledging guilt and making an offering of beer or meat for them to feast upon; then, while they eat or drink, they *admit their anger* and express goodwill.

> The doctor comes beforehand and gives the sick man medicine to drink. A cow is killed. People are there and say: 'May this medicine help our child.' To drink without people there is like continuing the quarrel. People are there and they speak (*ukwijaja*), saying: 'Someone was angry, but no one is angry now. May this medicine help you.' They drink beer and eat meat saying: 'We are not angry now.' Those who were angry are present and they are satisfied. *Ukwijaja* is to speak many things, and it is like praying (*ukwiputa*) but without actually taking water and spitting.

578 Sometimes responsibility is fixed squarely on *either* shades *or*
776 neighbours, but since neighbours are said to 'help a father to
783 murmur' against an erring son, and since they may share in beef or beer offered to the shades, the rituals merge into one another, and some offerings seem to be intended to pacify *both* the shades and the neighbours, though in Nyakyusa theory the sources of

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[1] Discussed in relation to the age-village in *Good Company*, pp. 96–108.

misfortune and the rituals are distinct. In theory, when the shades 578
are angry the essential offering is that made in the sacred banana 775
grove or on the hearth; it is eaten by the grandsons of the most 783
recently dead, and whether neighbours partake or not depends upon the generosity of the officiant; whereas when neighbours are angry there is no offering in the grove or at the hearth, the neighbours are feasted, admit anger and express forgiveness.

However, neighbours are slow to admit responsibility (for to 789
curse someone comes close to witchcraft) and in some cases there is both a formal feast for the neighbours and a prayer to the shades, and it is left uncertain where final responsibility rests. The following texts illustrate this:

Mwaikambo: It is the custom among us Nyakyusa to marry many 595
wives, mature ones and young ones, so if a man has sons at his home it 837
sometimes happens that one of them makes love to one of his father's wives. Perhaps they commit adultery in secret, perhaps he runs off with her to a distant chiefdom. Then the father breaks off relations with him.

The son, wherever he is, learns that he has been cursed by his father 593
and his body becomes like goose flesh. If the son is wise he gathers his 789
property and returns to his father. He takes a friend with him and goes 783
into the house of one of his father's neighbours. His friend and his 621
father's neighbour speak together. 'I have come to return unto my father because I have done wrong.' He tells the neighbour what they have brought to offer the father—usually a cow and a bull. Then that neighbour seeks three comrades or perhaps four or five, and they go to pacify their irate fellow, saying: 'Our child has returned. He knows that he has done wrong towards you, but we have received him because he has confessed humbly and begged forgiveness.' His father refuses furiously and almost spears himself in his passion. His fellows pacify him for the whole day, or perhaps two or three days, then at last he agrees. Then the young man and his fellows bring the cow and the bull. The
father also calls together many of his fellows and he seeks beer and 593
cooks food. They gather together at the father's homestead and the 789
father says: 'My son has come and admitted that he has done wrong, 783
asking that I forgive him and saying: 'I did not know what I was doing, these are the cattle which I have brought', and the others agree. Then they kill the bull. They roast some meat. The father catches one side of it, the son the other and the village headman cuts it in the middle, and the father and son each eat their piece. This is the blessing ([illegible]), meaning that there is kinship between them now. They eat together. Then all the people eat. Also with the beer it is like this. The village headman picks a straw and puts it in the beer, hands it to the father who drinks, and then to the son. Then other people drink, and they

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ritual they distinguish *abakamu* (kinsmen) from *abandu itolo* (non- 613
relatives) or *abapakipanga* (villagers), and *abakikolo* (those of the 621
lineage of a dead man) from *abako* (affines) and mother's relatives (*abipwa*). These categories have different functions.

(*b*) *Christians*

The performance of family rituals is complicated by the fact 795
that 16 per cent of the Nyakyusa are professing Christians, and in 571
almost every lineage there are individuals who withdraw from the full performance of traditional rituals at death, puberty, and marriage, birth, and misfortune. In most cases such a withdrawal is treated tolerantly by the pagan kinsmen: the Christian kinsmen come to mourn, to congratulate the bride, to express sympathy with the parents of twins; and their non-participation in the washing and shaving and avoidance of ritual meat and beer is accepted. At the funeral of Mwamulenga his preceding full brother, who should have been a principal in the death ritual, was a Christian, and he took no part, though his children went through it. At the funeral of Mwampiki (p. 248) one boy was left untreated on the ground that he was a Christian and a Christian 'should not have two gods'. At the puberty ritual of Mwaihojo's daughter (p. 91) the brother called to wash with her was influenced by Christians and was reluctant to take part, though he finally did so.

Only when a son who is heir to family wealth, or to the office of 626
chieftainship or priesthood refuses the inheritance of widows (as a 795
Christian must do) is there very strong pressure on him to conform to traditional custom: the union of the heir with the widows is held essential to their health. Sometimes also there is acute con- 578
flict between different members of the family over the perfor- 763
mance of an autopsy, the pagans pressing for it and the Christians opposing it. This we saw in the death of E. when her pagan senior *brother wished to examine her, and her Christian junior brother* opposed him vehemently.

That Christians cannot take part in certain of the rituals[1] and 795
do not suffer if they omit them is generally accepted. The farewell 184
to the dead at the homestead of the deceased, and the treatment of 788
kinsmen of twins, fall into this category. About certain other rituals, such as the ritual of the gasping cough and the protection against sorcery, opinions are divided. Some of our Christian friends insisted that 'the gasping cough is a real illness' and cited

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[1] There are minor differences in the rules of the different missions.

775 184 789 the case of a Christian who had stayed away from a ritual in his family and 'as soon as he met his relatives he fell sick and coughed like an animal. So they got some of the lees of the beer and gave it to him and he recovered.' A number of Christian kinsmen, leaders in the Church, did not come to the gasping-cough ritual which we attended, but others did come and sipped the beer, or had the lees sent to them at their homes. In the ritual for protection against sorcery which we watched a Christian brother and his wife took part.

And some Christians, though they deny the necessity of many of the pagan rituals for themselves as Christians, still believe them to be necessary to their pagan kinsmen. Hence the anomalous (and to the missionaries the highly unorthodox) position of a woman professing Christianity and acting as officiant in a pagan ritual, as did N. in the death ritual for Kalata's mother (p. 239). N., it will be remembered, came by night. The officiant who performed the ritual for Mwakobela's twins was under instruction as a Christian and was proposing to hand on her medicines to her daughter, a pagan, when she herself was received into the Church. She explained this when Mwakobela (her patient) asked her: 'And what shall we do for twin medicine when you become a Christian?' And we had little doubt that she believed in the efficacy of her medicine for pagans.

Though Christians cannot go through pagan rituals as principals they do not withdraw altogether: they often help their pagan neighbours as grave-diggers at a funeral and in the provision of food for guests at funerals and marriages; and the young men and girls may dance as a separate group, singing their own
● [576] songs or hymns and ignoring the drums. Sometimes acute rivalry between the two groups of dancers is apparent.

771 177 The effect of Christian teaching on pagan ritual is not limited to the partial withdrawal of professing Christians. In those villages most influenced by missions, such as Ilolo, near Rungwe, there is considerable scepticism among pagans, and many of them curtail the rituals in their families, or do not attend them. The Christian view is that 'the pagans see that the Christians disregard the rituals and nothing happens to them, so they begin to ignore them too'. 'Pagans fear much less than they used to do.'

177 464 Men who are in European employment either inside or outside the district cannot attend all the rituals. Their case is partially met by keeping the lees of the ritual beer with which to treat them

[585] 834 of which the basic rule is the separation of the reproductive activities of successive generations.

> If my wife goes to the inner part of my mother's house, it is a wrong. Perhaps she will bear a thin and sickly child. She has gone to the inner part of her in-law's house and my mother is angry with her for going where my father goes. Perhaps, when she is first pregnant, my wife goes to the back of her own mother's house. That is a wrong, too. Perhaps she will have a difficult labour. The trouble in both cases comes from the anger of the elders, my mother's in the first case, her mother's in the second. It is said that if my wives have seen my father by inheritance, then, when I die, the fathers who are dead will not receive me because I have injured ('kept back') their younger brother. I think, for my part, that the pagans honour this custom [of avoidance] very much because they say that the shades will be angry if it is neglected.

775 673 •578 681 Apart from the neglect of rituals, the types of behaviour commonly believed to be directly punished by the shades are (1) quarrels between father and son or between brothers, turning on the seduction of a senior's wife by his junior, on the sharing of marriage-cattle or, nowadays, on the sharing of the earnings of a young man working for wages, or on his seduction of women which necessitates the payment of fines by his father; (2) quarrels between father and daughter or father-in-law and son-in-law turning on the handing over of marriage-cattle by the son-in-law and the provision of gifts for his daughter by the father; (3) quarrels between husband and wife; (4) quarrels between relatives of all sorts over failure to attend, or to invite to, rituals; and (5) the neglect of his wards by the heir.

578 775 Cases of family quarrels over seduction leading to misfortune have already been quoted (pp. 134–5; 187–8). One concerning cattle and earnings was cited by Mwakwelebeja. A young man, X., went out to work and left the cattle he earned with his elder full brother. When he married he took all these cattle and gave them to his father-in-law. His elder brother was very angry. X. said: 'I take all the cattle for you have never given me any of yours.' His brother replied: 'How could I give you cows? I have no children.' Then all the cattle X. had given to his father-in-law died and had to be replaced. 'The shades were angry because when the younger brother took the cows his elder brother complained very much.' And if a young man goes out to work and gives his father no share of his earnings the shades are angry: 'Perhaps I will fall ill; perhaps when I look for work I shall not

find it. There are many cases like that. My friends in the age-village will go to a diviner who will declare that the shades are angry because I do not care for my father.' If a daughter makes a runaway marriage her father is angry and it is believed that either she may not conceive or her baby may be ailing until the marriage-cattle and bull of puberty have been given by her husband and accepted by her father. 578 775

The respect and obedience due to a father is due to his heir, and in certain circumstances to his sister also; while on his part the heir has the same obligations to his juniors as the deceased had. Fibombe cited the example, already quoted, of a man quarrelling with his dead father's sister over the distribution of the marriage-cattle for his own sister, and the girl failing to conceive because of the anger of her father's sister. If a son, whose parents are dead, neglects to provide his sister with the customary gifts of food when she returns to her husband after a visit to her 'father', he may become impotent: 'Those below are angry and when he has begotten twins he will have trouble at the ritual.' Or the girl may fall ill. 'She thinks: "Who is my father? This is my father, but he does not care for me."' The mystical power of a senior relative is linked directly with his obligation to give gifts: 593 688 602 431

> My father's elder half-brother has power over me only if he has given marriage-cattle for my father or nurtured him. If he has given him cattle to marry a wife then he has power over him. . . . My superior (*mbala gwangu*) is he who gives me everything.

Favouritism in a polygynous family, shown in the unfair division of milk or meat or fish by the husband between his wives, is thought to anger the shades, which cause his cows to bleed from the udder when milked, or prevent fish entering his traps, and so do the bad temper and insulting language of a quarrelsome wife. Mwakwelebeja explained that: 595 775 578 [825]

> If a woman is bad-tempered when she is making beer the beer goes sour. If my wife and I quarrel my shades are angry and the beer is spoiled. I say to my wife: 'You have spoiled the beer because you do not listen to what I say.'

Neglect of his wards by the heir is a wrong-doing frequently mentioned. 686

> It is said that if I neglect my brother's children he and my father will be very angry, they will not come to meet me when I die, as the

Yet still she remains a daughter of her father's lineage and shares 613
in its rituals as well as in those of her husband's.

Lineages are linked by marriage and kinship between them is 613
established by the passage of cattle. The son-in-law becomes 'one 581
blood' with his parents-in-law when they drink the beer brewed or eat the chicken killed at the consummation of the marriage; some of his semen is buried in his father-in-law's grove, and his spear is placed in his father-in-law's hut. The significance of the link is magnified by the thicket of taboos which surrounds 'mixing bloods'; and once forged the link should be, and commonly is, retained long after the deaths of the individuals by whom it was created, for each is replaced, the husband by a brother or son, the wife by a sister or brother's daughter. For each heir the ritual of 'mixing bloods' is performed afresh reminding them of their separation and union.

Cattle are closely identified with men and therefore with line- 613
ages. The shades watch over them. Like men, they are in danger from women who are ritually impure; at the death of their owner they, too, mourn; and kinship relationships are established and expressed by their transfer from one lineage to another. 'Kinship is cattle.'

The distinction and opposition of lineages is apparent in the 613
ritual of puberty and marriage which expresses both hostility and 585
conciliation. The two lineages dance in rivalry, haggle over cattle, 581
and exchange feasts. Among the Nyakyusa, the opposition is not 578
between men and women, as suggested by some recent writers on rituals elsewhere,[1] but between lineages; though the men and the women, both of the groom's party and the bride's, act separately. The hostility and conciliation reach their culmination in the ritual of vituperation among the Lugulu, when groom's group and bride's insult each other by word and in action and then, at the instance of the master of ceremonies, praise each other and feast together.

Among the Nyakyusa there is no clan organization and no [614
common name for a lineage of many generations like the Pondo 171]
isiduko, which identifies agnatic kinship within a large group. A 615
common name is used by members of a lineage of three or four generations at the most, and among commoners there is no invocation of a distant ancestor as among the Pondo. The hero

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[1] E. Fromm, *The Forgotten Language*; M. Gluckman, 'The Role of the Sexes in Wiko Circumcision Ceremonies', in *Social Structure*, edited by M. Fortes (1949).

V. CAUSES OF MISFORTUNE

761 *(a) The death of Katasya*

The following account of the death of Katasya is quoted in full
[128] because it illustrates how several possible causes of misfortune were considered. Possible causes mentioned were:

(a) The anger of his junior kinsmen
(b) The witchcraft of his wives
(c) The anger of his shades
(d) The anger of his neighbours because he had given them too small a cut of a bull killed as a sacrifice to his shades
(e) The adultery of his son with three of his wives
(f) The sorcery of his half-brother's son, Mwamukinga, with whom there was a long-standing quarrel over inheritance and whom he had accused of killing his (Mwamukinga's) full brother
(g) The sorcery of the Chief Mwaihojo, for Katasya, a man of the neighbouring Chief Mwaipopo, had built and cultivated on land claimed by both Mwaihojo and Mwaipopo

Record of G. W., 4/1/38

761 Angombwike told me at midday that Katasya had died. He was a village headman of Mwaipopo, the fellow of Mwainyopolela. His case (*inongwa*) was thus:

The millet did not grow in his field, so he called all his children to
782 his homestead and killed a big bull for them, saying: 'Perhaps my children are angry at home. Perhaps my wives have worked witchcraft.' But to the neighbours he gave one leg and the children at home ate the rest. He did not, however, live long. He died immediately. It is said that the meat is still there. They have not eaten it. Such is the case of his death.

Kasitile, when I called on him yesterday, was out and his wife said he had gone to see Katasya who was ill.

Later in the day—4.1.38. Likuyila came in and I asked about Katasya's death.

But he has not died, he is still just alive. We heard that the millet
[787] failed in his field and the maize and beans in all his gardens. They all failed. One of his wives went into a trance repeatedly. She said: 'Those beneath are angry. Seek a bull and kill it.' Then he sought one, but
761 now they have killed him. Perhaps he stinted his fellows in the village
578 of meat, because if a man kills his animal alone and his fellows hear

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that he has killed, they are astonished and say: 'He should have called us. Does he perform ritual alone?'

QUESTION: But why were those beneath angry in the first place? They are not angry without cause.

LUKUSYILA: Indeed, they are never angry without cause. There is always some wrong. But we do not know what it is in this case. If you do not kill cattle for your father's burial they are always angry. But we do not know what wrong Katasya committed to make them angry.

Later Mwanifu came in. He told me that Katasya is still alive, but 754
perhaps he will die this evening. We do not speak with him. He is just 782
breathing. We only ask his wives: 'Does he sleep?' The case is thus:
the millet failed in his field and he said: 'I shall pray to my shades and
it will grow again.' Then he went to a certain man to get his big bull
and gave him a cow in calf, saying: 'Take this and give me your bull,' [437]
and later they will give him a little calf worth 30s. The bull was very
big. He killed it. Before he did so he was already slightly ill, but when
he had killed it the illness became very much worse. We say they have
bewitched him because he stinted his fellows in the village. But they
themselves deny it, saying: 'But we always kill and eat ourselves alone.
I, Mwainyopolela, killed my animal and ate it alone. Have I died 782
therefore? According to the custom, if I have killed my beast as a
sacrifice (*jakuipatala*) then I give my fellows one leg.'

QUESTION: Did Katasya not do so?

MWANIFU: No, Katasya did not give them any. He ate alone. Some wise men give the chief the breast because the chief is the owner of the country. Katasya did not give him that. Yes, if someone dies then the chief is usually given the breast. But when a beast is killed for sacrifice, no one having died, then many eat by themselves. The mourner gives to the chief.

QUESTION: Did he inquire of a diviner or not?

MWANIFU: We do not know. Some inquire of a diviner. Some think 787
for themselves that the fathers are shaking them. Concerning his death, 754
we are only speculating, saying: 'Perhaps they have bewitched him. 761
They were angry on account of the meat.' But perhaps it is sorcery.
See, he was sweating very much on his face. Let him die. We will look
in his belly. Perhaps he has been speared. They have bewitched him.
Perhaps it is sorcery. We only speculate.

In the morning Mwaipopo (the chief) was very, very angry. He said: 763
'Why have you gathered together, you people? Go off home. Do you
want to finish off a dying man? It is taboo to gather together. First let
a man die, then come to lament the death.'

QUESTION: Is it a Nyakyusa custom to be angry if people gather together at a sick man's house? Is it as if they bewitch him?

MWANIFU: Yes.

763 As we came away various people stopped us and asked: 'Have you examined him?' 'Yes, it is sorcery.' Great interest was shown by all in the cause of death.

764 When we first arrived, we found the son a little distance from the funeral and he did not, so far as I know, come near at all. He did not go near the grave when the corpse was buried. I asked Kasitile about bathing at the waterfall. 'They will wash him to-night. Katasya died in the afternoon. At night the son and three women fled. They will wash them at night.'

6/1/38

Kasitile came in to see us at breakfast time. I asked why the son of Katasya had not come near the burial though they had bathed him at the waterfall.

KASITILE: It is forbidden, but they have made a mistake. They have washed him irregularly. According to custom they should first have buried the dead, then, on the evening after the burial, they take them to the waterfall to wash them. When they come from washing, then the son takes a torch of burning grass, he throws it down on the grave, and jumps over the grave. Then they say: 'Let him strike the cattle.' He kills one of his own because he does not eat of those which they have killed previously. This is what they did yesterday afternoon, so it is finished now.

QUESTION: What does it symbolize?

KASITILE: It means it is I who overstepped you.

QUESTION: And when he steps over the grave and the fire?

KASITILE: It is the fire which the women kindled for him who has died.

QUESTION: Do they know who worked sorcery against him?

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754 KASITILE: Yes, it is the son of Mwaikilaja whose name is Mwamukinga, because when their father, Mwakyandwike, died, the elder brother, Katasya, was a child, and the son of the second wife, Mwaikilaja, inherited. But when Katasya grew up they refused to be on good terms with him and quarrelled with him. But they never worked sorcery against each other. So then when Mwaikilaja died, his sons inherited. Katasya lost the inheritance because they said: 'You are not on good terms with your kinsmen. Let the sons inherit.' So he said: 'I, Katasya, agree.' But later on he was on good terms with those sons of his brother. There were three of them. But the eldest and the youngest quarrelled. The youngest, Mwamukinga, worked sorcery against the eldest, so Katasya told them: 'Do not be friendly with Mwamukinga who is working sorcery against you. Let him be at a distance.' Then Mwamukinga was angry and said: 'Is that wretched elder (*ilala ali*) never going to die?' and he worked sorcery against him. This is the case.

428 Mwakionde let Mpoma (Mwakasekele) take the inheritance because he
is the eldest. Mwakionde said: 'Let him be their father.' But when
they gave the inheritance to Mpoma, they talked to one another and
said that Mwambujule should take one wife because he did not have
any wife. He was a bachelor. So they gave him one wife, but four wives
of the father were inherited by Mpoma. After a little time Mwambujule
said: 'My fellow has made a mistake with the property and he has
428 not given me anything.' So he strove to attract the mothers. He said:
578 'Come to me and let me inherit you myself.' The mothers agreed, they
● ran away and came to his place. Mpoma was angry and went to
Mwakionde to tell him that Mwambujule had attracted the mothers
and taken them to his house. Mwakionde said: 'Do not make a case.'
The village headman went to Mwambujule to admonish him together
with the mothers. Then he returned them to Mpoma.

754 Later on, illness appeared. The sister of Mpoma fell ill. They gave
787 her medicines to drink and she recovered. Then the brother of Mwambujule
fell ill and the doctors said it was sorcery (*ubutege*), that is,
Mwakionde thinks it is sorcery. This is also a common rumour. But,
as will be seen later, the diviners, when appealed to, said: '*Mindu*,'
that is, the shades.

755 When Mwakionde saw the sick man, he called together all of them
754 that they might grumble (*bijumane*) and drive away the illness, because
it is said that when people pray (*ukwiputa*) the sickness from sorcery
gets less. It is said if one has worked sorcery against his fellow he always
hides himself, he does not appear at his friend's home, because, if he
appears, if he comes and says: 'I am sorry for the illness (*ndaga ububine*),'
even without praying at all, the illness disappears. Also, if a sick
man has died, he does not go or he will die soon. It is said that the dead
rise. Yes, it is the same in the case of witchcraft. Then also they say that
if someone has 'eaten' his fellow he does not go to him, he hides himself
at his own home, and if his fellow has died he does not go or he will
die very quickly. The dead rise. In the prayer they especially drive
away the shades, because it is said that sickness from the shades comes
from us living. If, for example, I have done something bad to my
fellow, and the shades are angry, but if he forgives me, they also forgive.
He must express forgiveness openly in words of prayer (*amasyu gamo ga
lwiputo*). If he forgives me only in his heart, the shades do not forgive.
This prayer that we heard during the day had power both against sorcery
and against the shades, they spoke of both. In the evening it was
completed.

754 Mwakionde called them all together and said: 'Friends, I am astonished that the illness has come again.' The people: 'Hu; this illness puzzles us very much.'

Mwakionde: 'For what reason does this man fall ill in the summer, and that man fall ill in the summer, and the other fall ill?'

MPOMA: 'I am ashamed, and also I am very angry, because people 754
say it is I who am working sorcery against them, although when they 578
were ill I carried them to my house.'[1]

Mpoma turned back on the road when they sent medicine for the sick man (i.e. he did not go to the sick man).

A WOMAN: 'Why do they work sorcery against one another when they are both left?'

ANOTHER WOMAN: 'The wives of Mbikule say Mpoma says: "Let me be alone, let me kill all of them and get everything for myself by cunning." '

MWAMBUJULE: 'Since I carried him to my place I said the illness would not be serious. He also sent a message to *your* place, Mpoma, saying that he was ill, and asking for some milk, but you did not send any.'

MPOMA: 'No one told me.'

THE WOMAN: 'The widows fight with Mpoma. They say: "You have eaten a medicine to work sorcery against your fellows." '

KANYAMALE: 'Also they speak of his wrongdoing, in not approaching the sick man.'

ANOTHER WOMAN: 'Yes, and also you are angry.'

MPOMA: 'See, when they said the present patient was still ill, I prayed, I said aloud: "What am I doing? Get away, what am I doing?" and I sent a medicine and he recovered.'

A WOMAN: 'We consulted an oracle, it said: "It is Mwakyona who 787
is angry," but I said: "What is he angry about?" The oracle said: "He is angry on account of cattle." He says: "Why does he fear me when he has taken cattle?" So we said: "Mwakyona is angry because he has taken cattle." '

THE MBUNGUS (Mwakyona's sisters): 'We like him (the shade), let 753
him come.'

WOMAN: 'They are jealous of the sick man [i.e. a third cause suggested. The unreasonable jealousy of his neighbours]. He dies like his father. People say: "He eats meat in our houses, he borrows our cloths," and he dies of their unreasonable jealousy (*akabini*)!'

The women and the men said: 'Thank you, Mwakionde, because you have made us think of these things [he had taken the initiative in prayer]. You make us make friends, and make us love one another, and bless one another.'

Mwakionde spoke, saying: 'There are many, many roads on which
people travel and there is one road through which illness enters.' They 782
say that if many people are with a sick man then the illness spreads.
They also prayed, confessing their anger in the case of Kanyamale, [783]

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[1] 'It is the custom to carry people to the "father", the head of the family, when very sick. This is not supposed to cure them, but it is customary ([illegible]). That is where we all are ill, at their father's place.'

574 of more importance are the magistrate and the missionary, whose coming is usually heralded afar, by the report that he is already in the district, and is now perhaps only a day's journey off, slowly making his way from village to village, and dealing with whatever matters require his attention as magistrate or missionary. His coming is a matter of importance, for he will have a number of men with him who will need food, by the sale of which the villagers hope to make a few honest pence; though abundance of food is often given freely as a token of welcome. As the great man approaches the village, all the younger people come out to meet him with shouts of welcome, and if he is travelling in a *machilla*, the men will take the pole from the bearers, and with tremendous noise enter the village and deposit him at the school or the chief's house.

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•578 And the sadder side? Sickness, epidemics, the perpetual fear of witchcraft and of evil dreams foreshadowing ill, theft with its ever-present possibility of accompanying murder, quarrels that will not heal, forced marriages, and all the hidden cruelty that so rarely comes to the surface. Most pathetic of all, perhaps, the feud between old and young; the young all for to-day and to-morrow, for the new ideas, the hope of progress; the old for yesterday with its stability and ordered life; the young going in crowds to church, the old going secretly, and no doubt sadly, to worship at the ancient shrines, guarding the approaches lest the levity of youth should desecrate the place of terror, and evil come upon all the land; the

young gathering around the white man, and lending 182
themselves to his purposes, the old even to-day ap- 561
proaching him with reluctance, if at all, for to them 578
he still retains much of the awe and hidden power
with which he was credited in the earlier days.

The individual Konde is not so popular with white 157
men as are members of other tribes; indeed there are employers who will not knowingly give work to a Konde at all. As workmen, it must be acknowledged that they are both less active and less reliable than surrounding tribes; they are neither so intelligent nor so loyal to contract. The Konde soon wearies of effort, and longs to get back to the lowing of his cattle and his pretty little hut in its banana grove. He loves his children, and the hope of being able to clothe them if he works well, does not compensate him for prolonged absence. Loyalty, as the Henga, Angoni, [177]
and Yao are loyal, does not distinguish the Konde, who show loyalty rather to chief and to tribal custom, than to the white man with his problematical benefits. They have never attached themselves to the European, as many of the surrounding tribes have done; for the Konde are less convinced than others that the one hope of Africa is the European and his influence; less convinced, be it added, that Africa stands so desperately in need of saving. That may be due to their unawakened condition—and, again, it may not. Edu- 872
cationally, too, they are less advanced than other tribes. 177
Only a few of them are to be found in Government offices, or doing the skilled work which commands such good pay from Europeans; nor have they supplied,

has a disease, from which he does not himself suffer, 787
but which passes over to the person who arouses the wrath.

At Karonga, if two old men fight with their fists, 787
and tear each other's garments, they have forecasted 579
death for each other. The death of a friend of one or the other will shortly take place. Among the Banyakyusa to the north, the fight of any two, young or old, with fists only, is a portent of the same significance. Such anger blazes up suddenly, and the two men fly at each other in blind fury, unable to restrain themselves sufficiently to go and fetch the weapons with which reasonable men fight. The fist as a weapon of war is not highly regarded by Africans generally, however dear it may be to others.

2. Unnatural actions. To invite an old man to 787
climb a tree may seem to us more laughable than 578
deadly; but to the Konde it is a dreadful combination of insult and forecast; it is a forecast, because such a thing is an insult so great as to be in itself a portent. The number of things that come under this head is legion; but generally, to ask an old person to do what is unnatural for an old person to do, is *kunkura*. Little girls quite innocently removing their scanty covering in the presence of an old man, have unwittingly warned him that his days are near an end. Perhaps under the same category we may include an invitation given by a child to an old man to come and eat; to us it could not come in a more charming way; but the old Konde would turn his back indignantly on the ill-bred brat who

787 so insulted him. This does not apply to an invitation
● 578 to drink beer, but no one can explain why there is
a difference.

3. Accusations against a man of good character come under the same heading. Some evil has been done, and the wrong-doer has not been discovered. Then, perhaps in joke, or it may be out of personal dislike, some one says that so and so did it. The person referred to knows that his days will not be long in the land. "Did I ever do a thing like that?" he asks indignantly. "Why, then, am I accused?" It can only be *kusikura*, and he expects to die, at the best, within a year or two.

787 4. If the spirits, in dreams, offer food, it must not
828 be accepted, even in the dream: to accept it means
death.

Connected with the foregoing, but having a
787 different name among the Konde, are insults or
578 injuries to parents. A man who fights with his father,
593 and throws him down, has achieved the final wickedness. Whether the old man was right or wrong in the matter in dispute is of no consequence; the whole community expresses its abhorrence of the deed. "Has this man reached even to God?" that is to say, does he consider himself the equal of God, that he does such things? Word is sent to the chief, and the whole district is informed of the evil thing that has been done. There is no formal denunciation, no spoken curse; but the *ikugune*, the curse of all fathers, and of all ancestors, is upon the son. He becomes lame; then unable to stand upright; finally he

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crawls about on his buttocks, a helpless object. The 593
curse has taken effect.

After a time good-natured people try to bring 578
father and son together again. The son is persuaded
to make his father an offering of an ox or a cow in 593
token of repentance. If the father agrees, a day is 783
fixed, and the whole community, including the little children, assembles at the house of the injured father. Beer is prepared, the ox is killed, the son publicly expresses his repentance, and the father his acceptance thereof. Then the people, having heard all the details of the crime,[1] express their feelings in a prolonged groan. A dose of medicine is now given to the son, a stick is put into his hands, and he is bidden to rise and walk, which he does in the presence of all! A similar curse falls upon the man who does evil with one of his father's wives; and there are a very few other crimes which automatically bring on the same punishment.

It is not difficult, from the point of view of modern 000
mental science, to explain the facts. The disability is due to the conviction in the mind of the younger man, strengthened by a similar conviction in the mind of the whole community, that such results always follow deeds like his. Similar phenomena are by no means unknown among Europeans, where the response to each other of mind and body is not so immediate as it is among the more unsophisticated Konde. The man bearing his sin is mentally, perhaps, rather than physically, unable to stand upright; and the conviction having been removed from his mind,

[1] [Fighting and throwing down one's father—Analyst]

of witchcraft is made. The people are assembled by 754
order of the chief, and the woman walks slowly round 695
the circle, gazing into the eyes of each person, and eliminating the innocent one by one, using no other test than the look in the individual's eyes. Those who remain are guilty.

Prosperity in another arouses all the evil passions of 754
witches and wizards. But prosperity in itself was, 578
until lately, evidence that the prosperous person was himself a wizard. There is a woman living not far from me who was accused before the British magistrate of pretending to exercise witchcraft, and to obtain cattle and other goods by threatening violence. She was dismissed on technical grounds, but ordered not to return to her own district. In conversation with her after the trial she told me that it was only the presence of the white man that saved her from being burned alive as a witch; the evidence against her being the rapid increase of her live stock. But the increase, she assured me, was "the gift of God."

Death by burning was the ancient penalty when [683]
that was inflicted publicly; but when the witches or 754
wizards themselves undertook to kill a fellow-sorcerer in jealousy, they did it in another way. Leaving their bodies behind them, they go to the house of the victim, enter by the roof, disturbing nothing; and finally enter the stomach of the sleeping person. Thence they wander about to lungs, heart, or liver, and wound him with their "secret spears." Next day the man is ill, and the day following he dies. If the *post mortem* reveals ulcers on heart, lungs, or liver,

"Why with cassava?" I asked. "Because the husband thinks of cassava as a security against famine; if a famine comes he takes his *busongo* cassava and gives some to each of his wives." 421 593 [261]

"And why with bananas?" "Because if he has bananas of his own, then when the chief sends the great-commoner round to collect bananas for guests, or to send to the hospital in Tukuyu, the man cuts one of his bananas. He realises that, as he has two wives, if he takes a banana bunch from one of them she will be angry and wonder why he cut her bunch and not that of her fellow wife."

"So it is only polygynists who keep separate *busongo* bananas?" "Certainly, no monogamist would ever do so."

"A man named Mwainaka," he told me later, "once disputed with his wife over the selling of maize. They had just begun harvesting the crop when the woman told her husband that she intended to take some of the maize to the shops and sell it and buy some cloths; for her child was naked and she had neither cloth nor skin to carry him in on her back, she had to hold him in her arms. Mwainaka, however, told her to wait a little until all the maize was harvested, when he would divide it up. His wife thereupon protested that the crop was their joint property and that he himself could take some for sale whenever he wished, so why not she also; and she pointed out that many other people had already begun to sell their maize and buy cloths. So they quarrelled and Mwainaka struck his wife, who then ran complaining to the great-commoner. The great-commoner heard the case and judged that Mwainaka was in the wrong because his wife had no skin for carrying her baby and was in trouble therefore. If, he said, she had not been in such trouble over carrying the child they would have given their opinion against her for refusing to agree with her husband's proposal to wait and finish harvesting first, but as it was they thought that Mwainaka was in the wrong; no division of plots or crop had been made and the food was their common property. And Mwainaka admitted that he was wrong." "Did he pay his wife any compensation for the blow?" I asked. "No, they reconciled them to one another." 421 578 593 627

"And if a man," I enquired further, "takes some of the food which belongs to himself and his wife jointly and sells it without telling her, will she make a case against him?" "She may, but if she is a gentle wife she argues it out alone with her husband; she asks him why he did not consult her, for there is now but little left and she wonders what they will eat. And her husband, if he is a sensible man, agrees with her and admits that he was in fault. But if, instead, the man makes out that he had every right to take it, for the food is as much his as hers, and if he is indignant at her protest then that attitude will bring a quarrel between them." 421 578 593

178 643 Magemo to Mwakabanga no Kyungu has ever been succeeded by his own immediate heir; the choice of Peter as successor to Mwangalaba was unique, for he was his full brother and the heir to his property, but then Peter's ability and personal wealth were unique also. And in the case of the great chiefs and the nobles also the principle of election is still followed.

178 554 683 The grounds of election have slightly altered. Generosity and wealth are still important, but "wisdom in European ways" is now more looked for than maturity, and shortly before our visit a fairly young man was chosen as Mwakasungula. Bravery in war, of course, no longer matters.

178 565 622 The Administration have so far made little use of any great chiefs except the three who are now "Sub-chiefs;" but the others (the "Important Headmen") could be made into effective local rulers, if their salaries were raised. The ordinary chiefs and nobles (the "Village Headmen") are too numerous and have too few subjects to be very effective links in the chain of modern authority. But many of the great chiefs command the respect of considerable numbers. Moreover the fact that they are already being elected for their "wisdom in European ways" suggests that they will prove competent to deal with modern problems.

The traditional secular procedure of election is still followed, with some exceptions: the nobles of Ngonde are now sent by the Kyungu to participate in the "catching" of the great chiefs of Ngana[1] on the spot; the District Commissioner is informed of the result of every election; while the Kyungu himself, no longer secluded, takes a bigger share in making the choices than his predecessors very well could. And many of the religious elements of the traditional procedure, such as the setting of a new Kyungu on the iron stool *Kigumbi*, have fallen out of use.

The sending by Peter of the nobles of Ngonde to catch the chiefs of Ngana is a sign of the present centralization of power in his hands under Government. When we asked why the old custom had been changed we were told that it was "because now everything is under the control of Government and comes to the Kyungu."

The gradual ousting by chiefs of the few ruling territorial nobles who still remain in the plain has continued in modern times, but the novel conditions have complicated the process and seem to be checking
• [571] it. A recent quarrel between Kajuni and Mwenelupembe illustrates this. The head of the house of Kajuni, which is a junior branch of the

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[1] I think this is also true of the less important territorial nobles of the hills, but am not sure.

Mwenengubwe, has attained more or less the status of a great chief; but 178
his country originally belonged to the noble Mwenelupembe. One of 565
the Kajunis married a daughter of Mwenelupembe and, in the usual way, 622
became the effective ruler of most of the country. But the position was 578
not formally clarified, Kajuni and Mwenelupembe are said to have lived on the best of terms, "and there was no boundary between them." After the arrival of the Europeans Kajuni was recorded in the Government list as the "Headman," for taxation purposes, with the consent of Mwenelupembe. And this meant that Mwenelupembe received no share of the tax money. But then, recently, Kajuni sold some of their land to a European for a tobacco shamba without consulting Mwenelupembe, who was furious, and demanded his own tax register and to have a boundary formally marked out between them. And this has now been done. The present cash value of the status of a ruler has altered the economics of the situation, the decline of the religious status of Mbande lessens the comparative importance of the royal blood, while new occasions of dispute between the rulers are now present.

The "coming out" (*swaroka*) has ceased in Ngonde owing to the 178
smallness of all the present chiefdoms, both in area and numbers, and the 622
impossibility of finding sufficient land and followers for two successors to any local chief.[1] There has been no "coming out" since 1913. Each local chief is now succeeded by one younger full-brother (or one son) alone. But still among these "Village Headmen" popular favour determines their position. If his subjects do not like a "Headman" they move away to his neighbours, and every emigration reduces his salary by 3d. a year.

(e) CONCLUSION.

Now the more autocratic form and the greater centralisation of the 178
modern constitution of Ngonde is very largely the product of inevitable 642
social forces. Granted the general conditions of contact between Africans and Europeans in Central Africa, a decline of the religion of Ngonde, with the consequential change in the relations of chiefs with their leading commoners, could not possibly be avoided. Nor could the old local autonomy possibly be fitted in unchanged to any modern administrative system. And Ngonde is not unique in this, similar changes, equally inevitable, can be seen in most areas of Central Africa.

Nor is the relative poverty of the majority of the Native rulers of Ngonde today a unique phenomenon either. Richards[2] has shown the

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[1] Owing to the climatic difference land is scarcer in Ngonde than among the Nyakyusa; but the implications of this fact we did not specially study.

[2] *op. cit.*

631 sons. To the dead chief's full-brother go his wives and cattle, so that property and power are usually inherited separately; in all the cases which I have investigated however, this brother has himself given some of the cows to the young chiefs, but the reasons for his action are still obscure to me. In so far as the dead chief's brother is still the religious head of both chiefdoms the functions of chieftanship may be said still to be divided; but all the secular functions are now normally exercised by the young chiefs. And the religious functions also fall to them when all their father's full-brothers are dead.

Political authority is the general authority of one or more persons within a community, whether local or nomadic, which goes beyond the bounds of a single family; a leadership confined to no one type of behaviour, but ordering a variety of social activities. Such an authority is wielded by a Nyakyusa chief, together with his great commoners, in his own chiefdom. There a number of legal, economic, religious[26] and ceremonial activities are controlled by them; and there, before the coming of the Europeans, they had military leadership also. But before that event no man had any wide political authority beyond the single chiefdom. The chiefs of Lubaga[27] had a far-reaching religious pre-eminence, but no general or political influence at all beyond their own country.

622
578 The only extensions of political power beyond a single chiefdom before European times, as far as I know, arose from the rivalry of brother chiefs. The division of an old chief's country into two was not always accepted by the young men concerned; quarrels and fighting between them were common, and the position established at the "Coming Out" was sometimes modified by war. If one of the two decisively defeated the other, he took all his brother's cows and reduced him to a subordinate position. The land of the Nyakyusa is full of such minor chiefdoms; by the clerks who collect tax they are described as "villages," but they are
622 radically different from villages in their constitution. For, while they often consist only of a few score families, they are themselves articulated into age-villages and have at their head, not an elected great commoner (*ilifumu*) but a hereditary chief (*umalafyale*). A minor chief marries in the ordinary way, like a commoner, and only one of his sons inherits his chieftanship; while his chiefdom, owing to its small size, is often simply divided into two villages, one for the old, one for the young men. To-day his position carries with it neither wealth nor power; he has some authority over his own people, but less than the great commoners of his powerful

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[26] I am now speaking of the position of a chief after his father and all his father's full-brothers are dead, and before his own sons have "come out."

[27] Vide infra. sec: (c)

kinsman. Though some of the reasons for his subordination are to be 622
found in modern conditions, it is clear that many of the factors have
always operated.

Wars did not only occur between brothers; but when one chief 622
defeated another who was more distantly related to him, he did not, 727
apparently ever, reduce him to a minor position: He either took his
cows and then left him alone, or killed him and set up a brother of his
own as an independent though allied chief, or else, more rarely, killed
him, took over the country and directly incorporated it in his own. So
that, apart from the subordination of a defeated brother and his heirs,
political authority always stopped at the boundaries of each separate
chiefdom.[14]

The traditionally independent chiefdoms to-day vary in numbers 631
from 100 to about 3,000 adult men. 161

The coming of the German Administration in 1893 introduced a 636
paramount political authority, for the first time, in the persons of European 177
officials; while in 1926, a generation later, the British Administration
created new Native Authorities under the District Officer and superior to
the chiefs. The traditionally independent chiefs were grouped together
in eleven court districts, in each district a "Native Court" was set up,
consisting of the various chiefs and their great commoners, under the
hereditary presidency of one of the chiefs, who thereby became senior to
all the others in that court district. Salaries for chiefs have been intro- [465]
duced, and the senior chiefs receive far higher salaries than the others;
while the meetings of each Court are always held in the territory of the
senior chief (*omalafyale ogholamba*); and to it has now been transferred
a great deal of the legal business which, before 1926, was transacted by
each chief sitting with his own great commoners in his own chiefdom.
The chiefs themselves were consulted in the selection of the Court Presidents, and those chosen were normally the chiefs with the greatest
number of men in each particular court district.

In this account the term *senior chief* (*omalafyale ogholamba*) denotes
the President of a Native Court, *chief* (*omalafyale*) means one of the
traditionally independent chiefs, while *minor chief* (*omalafyale omnandi*)
means one of the subordinate chiefs, often with only 40-60 men under him.

The introduction of Courts and salaries has brought an entirely 636
new element into the relationship between old and young chiefs (*vide* 177
578

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[14] Among the Konde of Nyasaland, I am told, there was a paramount chief Kyungu, with a far-reaching political authority; but there was no such chief among the Nyakyusa.

636 177 578 *supra*). Only one of them can receive the salary and they commonly dispute about it. Quarrels are particularly frequent over the position of senior chief, for the presidency of a Court carries with it a relatively large salary. Old senior chiefs cling to the position long after their sons have "come out" and when they die their full-brothers still dispute the position with the sons because of the salary involved. Such a situation could not have arisen before 1926, for then there was no comparable issue between them.

636 622 177 And the introduction of salaries has also had a most profound effect upon the relative status of the two young chiefs who "come out" together. When an ordinary chief, with a small salary, dies the Government recognises the first son alone as chief and pays the whole salary to him. This reduces the second son to the position of a minor chief as effectively as a defeat in war might have done in the old days. But, while the action of warfare only occasionally led to the subordination of one of the brothers, this action of the Government does so invariably, and always subordinates the younger brother. When a senior chief dies, on the other hand, the salary is usually divided: the bulk of it goes to the first son, together with the position of senior chief, while to the second son is given the salary of an ordinary chief.

554 622 As the prestige and authority of a father in his family, or of a man among his neighbours, is closely connected with his wealth on the one hand, and with his believed religious powers on the other, so also the status of a chief among his people. He has more cows, more wives, more food than other men; he is spiritually responsible for the fertility of the land, the women and the cattle of his chiefdom. But he is no autocrat, and all his public functions require for their exercise the co-operation of his great commoners.

622 595 Polygyny is, above all, the mark of a chief. Few commoners have more than five or six wives, but a chief frequently marries fifteen, thirty, fifty or even more; his wives weed and plant the fields which their unmarried sons hoe, and there is plenty of food for guests. Chiefs themselves hoe when they have time, and often they employ a poor man to hoe for them as well, rewarding him after a year or two with a cow. It is not 837 possible for one man to satisfy so many women sexually, and it is generally said that every chief's wife, save the five or six who are his favourites, has a lover. But intrigues must be carried on with care, for their discovery means a great public scandal.

The extent of a chief's polygyny is conditioned by his control of cattle, and his income in cattle is derived mainly from inheritance and the

instructed us, you have taught us the customs, we did not know 782
them, we thought that when the food came that was all.' 796

Kasitile said: 'Yes, I do it as our fathers did it.' Then they discussed the dispute between Mwakisisya and Kasitile and agreed that Kasitile had got the better of Mwakisisya with the reference to his own reluctance to provide cattle for sacrifice.

Kasitile was determined to extract a cow for sacrifice from the chief Mwaipopo (116) also, and presently he said:

> Friends, listen, let us report at home that we used hard words, we insulted Mwakisisya, we said there is nothing left to eat though we are not really starving. What has come over me? Why am I ill? Let Mwaipopo pay a cow.

The following day Mwamalongoka, one of the priests of Lubaga, explained what was meant by the complaint of insults from Selya:

> The people of Mwaipopo (116) do really insult us, and since the [177]
> Europeans have given them a Court they have begun to say that
> Mwakisisya (111) is a priest, not a chief, but just an old priest ([illegible]), [578]
> and we his men are all angry to hear this because Mwakisisya was always the senior. And they do not send us cattle to sacrifice, they say: 'It's European times now, all that is finished.'

But of Kasitile's retort that Mwakisisya himself did not listen to his priests at home, Mwamalongoka said: 'Indeed it is so, that was an excellent reply.'

The party going up to Lubaga and back travelled dry, but on the return journey Kasitile noticed that the road was wet and he remarked, 'The rain follows us again', and it was true, clouds were gathering quickly. An hour and a half after they got home heavy rain began and continued for three or four hours. During the preceding weeks there had been many heavy showers and bright spells, unnoticed and of no particular significance, but the downpour on the day of the sacrifice was immediately connected with it.

Three weeks later the rain had almost stopped and people were 769
talking of drought. Kasitile was quick to link this with the failure
to follow up the offering at Lubaga with sacrifices in the groves of 782
the chiefs. On the sixth of April he spoke his mind to Mwam- 796
bopota, the senior village headman of Mwaipopo, when both were visiting us.

> Where is the rain? [said Kasitile] I am at fault, and my child Mwaipopo (116) also. He ought to provide a cow to kill at Mwaijonga's

769 (82) grove. According to custom, we should kill a bull here at the same
782 time as one is killed at Lubaga. A messenger from there finds us eating.
776 That was the custom when the chiefs were really chiefs. Now we
neglect the rituals. Mwakisisya (111) cut a ripe banana stem for us, but now the bananas are rotting in the homesteads without ripening [owing to our failure to sacrifice]. If our fathers did not sleep they sacrificed cattle, but if we do not sleep we merely offer beer.

Then Kasitile recalled the quarrel between the men of Mwaipopo (116) and those of Lubaga.

Why did you insult Mwakisisya (111) saying 'What remains of your
[344] power?' When we built the Court House in Mwaipopo's country, Mwakisisya's men came to help, and some advised that a beast should be sent to Lubaga to seek blessing on the Court, but others said: 'What use is Lubaga?' . . . Mwakisisya cut a banana stem for us and said 'Seek another cow oh thou Mwakagile' (59, i.e. identifying Kasitile with the grandfather of the chief Mwaipopo whom he represented).

This, however, was an invention of Kasitile's. He continued: 'I, Kasitile, have seen a sacrifice at the grove of Mwaijonga (82) twice, at that of Mwaipopo (115) once, and at that of Mwakalinde (117) once, but at Lubaga Kyala has received us frequently.' To which Mwambuputa replied: 'Yes, Kyala has helped us.'

Under pressure from Kasitile and the other priests of his chiefdom Mwaipopo did eventually provide a cow for sacrifice at the grove of his father Mwaijonga (82) but the description of that ritual is deferred to a later chapter.

771 A fundamental conception in Nyakyusa religion is that the proper working of the natural order depends upon harmony of the social order; on proper co-operation between the 'divine king' and his 'sons' the chiefs, between priests and chiefs, and between
them and the whole community. If the Lwembe or a rain-
[731] maker is offended, that causes drought or flood in the area of his
[821] influence. When there is heavy rain in Selya it is said, 'There is anger at Lubaga' or 'There is anger at Lwembe's place'. Mwanjala II (78) talking of how angry he had been over an insult remarked, 'Had it been the wet season there would have been a torrent of rain.'

And not only does quarrelling between chiefs and priests bring
● [578] public misfortune; it reacts upon their own health. How Kasitile
758 linked his ill-health with the quarrel between Mwakisisya (111)
771 of Lubaga and the men of Mwaipopo (116) over the Court, and
Mwaipopo's failure to provide cattle for sacrifice has just been

indicated (*vide supra*, p. 55). And, as we shall see later, he also 771
suspected that his quarrels with the Kinga priests and with the [753]
commoner priests of Mwaipopo's chiefdom made him ill. [578]

Chiefs, and even the 'divine king' himself, lived in fear of the
legitimate anger of their people, more particularly of their village 643
headmen and priests, believing that such anger would bring them 753
sickness, and this belief gave headmen and priests a very strong [622]
hold over their lord. How it worked was illustrated by an incident
at Lubaga.

> Mwanjala II (78) remarked to Mwakilima (111): 'I sent to summon [796]
> Mwaseni (a commoner priest) for the ritual tomorrow but he refused
> saying: "I shall not come." He is angry because he was not called to
> the ritual at your home, nor was he told formally when the Kinga
> came, or when Mwaipaja [G.W.] came.' Mwakilima (111) asked:
> 'Will you pay him?' [i.e. admit your mistake and offer him compensation]. Mwanjala replied that he would, and Mwakilima expressed disgust. One of the Kinga priests who was listening broke
> into the conversation: 'Ignore him if he refuses to come. If it were us [796]
> we should leave him and celebrate without him, but you Nyakyusa
> are all witches, and you fear to ignore a man who refuses to come to a
> ritual saying that he will bewitch you. You are cowards, you are!'
>
> At this Godfrey Wilson asked if there were no witchcraft in BuKinga. The Kinga priest replied: 'There is some, but if the chief gives orders to celebrate a ritual and someone refuses to come we ignore him, and celebrate without him. You Nyakyusa *pay* a man for doing wrong. A man refuses to come when he should and then you *pay* him! If you are afraid of witchcraft why not finish the ritual and send his portion of meat to him afterwards?'
>
> Another priest objected: 'Then he would say it was too small a piece.'

The commoner priests then could control even the Lwembe (for Mwanjala II acted in the place of the Lwembe though he was not installed), but at the same time the mystical power of the Lwembe was feared both by ordinary chiefs and commoners. Mwaipopo (82), who ruled before the European occupation, insulted and fought Mwakisisya the Lwembe (56), and killed some of his men, because 'Lwembe had spoiled the year', but he sent back the cattle that were seized.

> In the old days it did not matter killing the Lwembe's men (in war), but [727]
> no one dared to take his cattle, they feared lest he would spoil the year
> and send too much rain, and a plague of ulcers, and cause the cattle to [789]

643 As we have seen, the chief's fearsome medicine *ipyifwila* is
778 thought to be very dangerous, and too much in the tails may cause
622 them 'to fly about throttling men and cattle', but a chief is never
[759] accused of working witchcraft; it is inconceivable to the Nyakyusa
that he could be. If the tails have got out of hand they are treated
[789] by a doctor 'to close them up'; no one suggests that the chief should
get rid of them. It is commoners, 'black people', who are witches
—cannibals, the eaters of raw flesh—as opposed to chiefs who, since the dawn of history, have killed cattle for meat and cooked their food like civilized men. But the distinction does not extend very far; junior kinsmen of the chief are 'commoners' and may well be accused of practising witchcraft.

There was a delicate balance of power in the Nyakyusa con-
[182] stitution between hereditary chief and commoner headmen and
the belief in the power of medicines and of witchcraft was an integral part of it. The chief provided fruitfulness by the power of his own body and his medicines; all men depended upon him for their well-being—food, cattle, children, success in war; but he in his turn depended upon the goodwill of his men led by their village headmen; without it he shivered and fell ill, only to be buried by them 'with the breath still in his body' lest the power of growth disappear with his breathless corpse.

Something of the quality of this mutual dependence and fear is conveyed in Kasitile's account of his own illness quoted in Chapter VIII.

(e) THE NECESSITY FOR HARMONY

182 The welfare of the chiefdom is thought to depend upon
643 harmony between the chief and his village headmen and priests,
622 and also between the chief and his kinsmen. Any friction between
them may result in public misfortune as well as sickness to the
793 individual at fault. The quarrel of Kasitile, the priest, first with
[753] the Kinga priests, and then with the commoner priests of Mwai-
[821] popo's chiefdom was believed to affect the crops and the weather,
as well as Kasitile's own health (*vide infra*, pp. 124-41), and
Mwaipopo's failure to tell Kasitile formally of the death of their
[688] kinsman led to rain which spoiled the funeral dance. A quarrel
between the lineages of two chiefs which should have sacrificed
643 together was said to have been followed by a very poor millet
602 crop (*vide infra*, pp. 79-80, 118, 136).

578 How the personal relationship of a chief with his kinsmen is

thought to affect the whole country was illustrated in Mwaihojo's 643
chiefdom where the people were plagued by wild pig destroying 602
their gardens. Mwaihojo (147) had a longstanding quarrel with 578
his half-brother, Mwakyonde (148), whose country he had seized after their 'coming out'. Mwakyonde became famous as a doctor, and he was a great raconteur and beer-drinker, a regular Silenus, [157]
the boon companion of many influential men, whereas his brother was cold and irascible; so although he had lost his chieftaincy, Mwakyonde had considerable power. In February 1937, four lions were seen in the adjoining chiefdom of Mwaipopo (116), and we heard pig squealing as it was killed. Angombwike (whose father lived near Mwakyonde in Mwaihojo's country) explained [754]
to us: 'People say that these are Mwakyonde's lions. . . . Lion-makers have bundles of twigs which they put into the long grass, [789]
and which turn into lions. Long ago Mwakyonde made lions and they came and killed all the pigs, and the country (Mwaihojo's) was at peace, but he quarrelled with Mwaihojo and put his bundles of twigs into his box and locked it up. Then the country was filled with pig, and buck, and elephant, and all the crops were spoiled, and so it is still. Now Mwakyonde has begun to be friendly with Mwaipopo (116); they enjoy each other's company and drink beer together, and so he is making lions again in Kipengo, the land where Mwaipopo is hoeing, to kill the pig for Mwaipopo. They say Mwaipopo has given him a country in secret.' Now Mwaihojo claimed as his the forest country, which Mwaipopo's men had begun to colonize, therefore to aid Mwaipopo there was an effective slap at Mwaihojo. The lions came into Mwaihojo's country—we heard them repeatedly close to our camp—but they did not clear the pig.

Then, in March, Mwakyonde was supposed to be using a new [778]
medicine he had obtained to scare off pig from the fields. We asked him about it. 'Oh, it has failed. The pigs are still there eating. I've done everything I should but without effect. I think [775]
that the pigs are possessed by the shades (*sili simindu ingulube*).' 'Why?' we asked. 'Because my elder brother (Mwaihojo) and I are not on good terms (*tutikwangala kanunu*) the shades are angry.'

So the destruction of men's gardens was traced to the quarrel between the chief and his brother.

CHAPTER V

SACRIFICES AT THE GROVES OF CHIEF

(a) THE PLACE, OCCASION, AND FORM OF SACRIFICE

778 A CHIEF is buried near the trees planted at his 'coming out' a
around the grave a thicket grows up. It is taboo for men to c
769 saplings or brushwood there and since trees grow very fast in t
[137] climate and soil of the Nyakyusa valley, the thicket soon become
a grove, and there sacrifices to the dead chief are made. T
priests look for the stone planted at his marriage, and place t
offering beside it. How long a chief is so honoured depends on h
conspicuous he was as a ruler or warrior, and perhaps also o
[782] whether the sacrifices are judged to be efficient in producing ra
and health or not. Mbyanga and Kabale, two groves which a
particularly honoured, were the shrines of founders of expandi
lineages. At Mbyanga was planted a cutting of a tree whi
sprouted from the grave of Mwakinambwe (91) who had fi
occupied the country in which Mbyanga is situated. He is oft
spoken of as having been 'buried' at Mbyanga, in fact he w
carried back ten miles to Lubaga, whence he had come, for buri
But he is worshipped at Mbyanga and we attended a sacrif
there for which his great-great-great-grandson, Mwaihojo (14
the chief, provided a cow, and Mwaihojo's grandsons ate the b
food. In contrast to this, the grove of Mwaipopo's (116) young
brother, who had once ruled a country but was defeated in w
and whose sons had died, was completely neglected; no o
sacrificed there. We know more than a dozen chiefs' groves
which sacrifices were made, and there must have been a gr
many more in different parts of BuNyakyusa.

643 Since every ruling chief normally had two heirs, sacrific
involved co-operation between independent chiefdoms—t
769 chiefs at the grove of their father, four at that of their grandfathe
and so on. But if there is friction between the chiefs, some branch
of the lineage cease to participate, saying that the connexion
'too distant', and celebrate at the groves of their nearer ancest
only. This happened at the sacrifice of Mbyanga which w
[578] attended (*vide infra*, pp. 79-81). The sanction for co-operation
[698] the belief that quarrelling between kinsmen annoys the shades a

may nullify any ritual, but often it is not strong enough to over- 643
come the fissiparous tendencies of the lineage. In theory a celebra- 769
tion at the grove of a senior should precede that at the grove of a [578]
junior and sacrifices at Lubaga would be followed by sacrifices at [688]
the groves of the 'sons of Lwembe' in order of seniority, but this
does not happen in practice nowadays and we doubt whether it
ever did, since a hierarchy was not organized and maintained by
a central authority as in Ngonde. In 1935 a celebration at the
grove of Mwaijonga (80) preceded one at the grove of his great-
grandfather Mwakisambwe (30) by a month, as we shall see.

Sacrifices are made when a drought or flood occurs, or a plague [731]
of locusts, or an epidemic among men or cattle; when fishing is [782]
poor in the chiefdoms of the plain, or war is imminent. They
occur most often during the 'winter' in the hills, when a malaria-
ridden people feel the chill of damp mists and cool south winds,
and in October, just before the break of the rains, when the
country is parched; but they are not confined to these periods.
In theory the village headmen and the priests who 'watch over
the country' foresee coming misfortune in dreams, and avert it by [787]
making the appropriate sacrifices. And they are helped by
ordinary people who are dreaming repeatedly or falling into a
trance or fit, and prophesying evil and jabbering of 'a black cow,
a black cow' or some other appurtenance of sacrifice. But in
practice the prophecies generally occur when there is hunger or
plague in the land, or an omen (such as a python or a ground
hornbill behaving oddly) has been seen.

The dreamers are *abasululi* or *abalungulula*, and, as these names 791
indicate, they are believed to have descended into the land of the 787
shades. *Ukusulula*[1] means to go down into something, like the roots
of a tree into the earth, and *ukulungula ingungulu* means to pluck a
banana flower which (as was shown in *Rituals of Kinship*) is a
symbol for a corpse and is buried; so the *abalungulula* are those
who have been buried in the earth. '*Abalungulula* go to the land of
the shades and return. . . . An *umlungulula* plucks up the "blessed
grass" (*ilinyiji*) in his swept courtyard and goes beneath and
sees.[2] . . . He goes down into the earth beneath and takes the
chief to the land of the shades when he dies, and he also sees
the witches. . . .' More rarely, the *asululi* or *umlungulula* is

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[1] *Ukusulula* = a breech presentation, the implication being that the infant's head is in [845]
[illegible], but children born in this way are not necessarily prophets.

[2] cf. Monica Wilson, *Rituals of Kinship*, pp. 73, 212.

9

769 782 weather, and the ritual. 'We prayed yesterday at Ipinda, Mwaipopo and all of us, we prayed and prayed. Did you feel the cold as much as usual last night? Did you hear the banana leaves rustle as usual?' 'No.' 'Well, Kyala has heard our prayer.'

At 7.45 a.m. they moved into the grove. A black cow had already been killed. 'We killed it at cock-crow, while it was still dark, we were all there. Mwambene (the chief Mwaipopo 116) handed the axe to Mwanyoso (his junior kinsman *vide* p. 84) who killed the cow.' Bananas were brought and all roasted them and ate, waiting for the other priests, Njobakosa and Kisogota. After a ● [578] discussion about certain persons who had not come because the last time they got no meat, one of them said: 'Don't talk of what is [784] forbidden in the sacred grove, don't let's make a noise; no, we pray to Mwakagile (59). . . . If we quarrel and make a noise the shades will not hear our prayer.' James (119), Kasitile's heir, was there but not Kasitile (86) himself. Someone asked whether Tandale ought to be summoned. But one said: 'We have never asked this Tandale to come here; we used to ask his father.[5] . . . Tandale lives in the boys' village. He has not the position of Ngulyo and Kisogota.'

Mwaipopo: 'Why do you argue about this today and not before?'

After an hour's delay Njobakosa arrived, and shortly after him Kisogota, who apologized, saying: 'I am late because my child has just died.'

Kisogota and Ngulyo flayed the cow, letting the blood pour out on to the ground. There was some discussion over the division of the meat, and they cut out the chine, saying: 'We send it with the tail to Kasitile—if we sever the tail we have spoiled it.'

Ngulyo took the sacred meat (*ifyamaapa*) from both forelegs, [778] and with Kisogota's help he chopped off twenty-three small pieces. The rest of this meat was left for the children. At 10.10 all gathered to go to the grave. A sacred stone (*ulufiga*)[6] was found under a tree. Mwaiteteja (Mwaipopo's junior kinsman) cleared the undergrowth with his bill-hook and dug a hole close to the stone, then he threw the meat which Kisogota was holding on two leaves, placed the leaves on top and filled in the earth. Five or six men spoke:

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[5] Tandale the senior had buried the previous chief, Mwaipopo I (115).

[6] It was not clear whether this was the one planted at Mwanjonga's coming out or not, since his [illegible] was some hundreds of yards away.

t was stolen by Ngoni raiders. When the brewing was ripe, the 769
hief sought a calabash of curds and Kalinga cut a stem of 782
ananas, and the priests ate and drank in her hut, together with unior kinsmen of the chief's family, but not the chief himself. As hey drank they prayed:

> Oh thou Mwakagile (59) give us millet, may it be plentiful, and may he milk be plentiful and may the bananas grow.

One pot of beer was due to Kasitile, the priest, and he would leave t overnight in his house.

> The shades come and drink a lot, only a little beer is left in the morn- [775]
> ng. . . . then the bananas flourish and there is much fertility in the
> omesteads. . . . The sacred pot gives fertility of the soil to the whole [778]
> ountry.

A very bitter quarrel flared up while we were in Selya because [578]
Kasitile came upon Ngulyo and his colleagues drinking the sacred eer without their having sent him his pot, or even notifying him f the brewing. The repercussions of this are discussed in chapter IX.

the shades and the hearths which was stressed; in Porokoto's 783
country people talked mostly of the witches; but it seemed clear [754]
that both conceptions were present when men murmured: 'The
hearth bricks are bad' (*amafiga mabibi*) and they sought to cleanse [775]
them by clearing out the old fire and lighting new. 'To clear out
the ashes means they take away all that dirt, the dirt which the
witches have brought and the shades; it is the cause of illness.'
When witches are thought to be active there is also a public
complaint, and a public warning is given 'to whom it may
concern' to desist.[1] This occurred in the ritual after the ground
hornbill had eaten the chicken. Above all, men must admit their [578]
anger to one another: 'they fight that the homesteads may be
peaceful'. The theme so familiar in Nyakyusa rituals—that [681]
quarrels must be confessed if they are to be composed—recurs
yet again. Though we distinguish the rituals for 'cleansing the
country' from sacrifices, on the ground that the whole community participates in the 'cleansing' while the sacrifice is esoteric,
the two are closely linked, and a sacrifice commonly precedes or
follows the cleansing. We turn now to the detailed accounts of
celebrations for 'cleansing' in Ngonde and among the Kukwe.

(*a*) THE RATS

In Ngonde they used to clear out the ashes at the new year, at the 783
first hoeing (in December) after 'the break of the rains'. They feared 796
that death and disease would spread through the land if they continued [758]
living with the old fires, that the shades in the earth, both the shades
of chiefs and of commoners, would be angry. Let them drive the shades [761]
away and hoe in peace. They always remembered to do so each new
year; for the old men used to keep these things in mind continually,
they never forgot. The Kyungu would summon the whole country to
clear out the ashes; and then they would hoe in peace. And at other [787]
times, too, if prophecy came on someone, they would clear out the
ashes again. 'It is to drive away the shade with the sickness that he
brings. We throw out the ashes and firebrands because he has come to
warm himself over the fire in our houses, we throw out the pots and
winnowing baskets because he has come to see us eating; let him go
there (to the grove) and eat what he asked for—we say the shades ask [775]
for food—let him eat here, perhaps a sheep. We say the shades bring
sickness to the fire, hence we throw out the ashes and make new fire
with a drill.'

The nobles of Ngonde approached the Kyungu and he gave [643]

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[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 109-13.

(*d*) THE WILD PIG

Another sort of cleansing, unorganized, but concerning groups of neighbours, not kinsmen, is the 'blessing one another' (*ukusajana*) which takes place if a pig-hunt fails and quarrelling between the hunters is suspected to be the cause. It was described by a Christian, who had called his pagan neighbours to help him in tracking down a pig, which he had wounded during the previous night in his maize garden. It eluded them, hour after hour, though they were close upon it.

783
7%
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[578]

The neighbours began to think that the pig was sent by the shades (*ali amisula*)—they meant themselves. So they stopped hunting and gathered together to express their anger, and they said: 'Our fathers built together and drank beer together, why should this pig trouble us so? We don't suspect our friend who is a Christian for he has shown that he has no quarrel with us. Had he been angry he would not have called us to hunt with him. But if one of the rest of us has a quarrel with his fellow let him speak out, that we may all be free of anger (*tuje bele*) and seize the pig, for if we think hard thoughts about one another we shall not have strength to take the pig.' All said that they were in friendship with their fellows, so first one and then another took his spear and . . . laid it on the ground and said: 'I am without anger (*Une ndimwoela itolo*).' All of them did this. One spoke to his fellow and said: 'Perhaps you are angry over that quarrel we had over beer?' But he replied, 'No.' Then the first man took up his spear from the ground and said, 'Father help us to catch this pig, if there was a quarrel, forgive, do not think of that with which I caused you to be angry. We bless one another, we are without anger.' Then all the others did the same, and they set off again to hunt.

This account, and the commentary of Mwaikambo on it, made it plain that the true translation of *bele* in such a context is 'without anger'. The communal rituals in which a whole chiefdom, or a group of neighbours, participate all have this one end, the cleansing of the group of quarrels by their open expression and explicit rejection.

789 drought, as in illness, a number of possible causes are discussed,
[775] and if one possible cause is dealt with and yet the drought persists,
another will be put forward. A shrewd priest or doctor can turn
[777] this to account and find many reasons for the failure of his ritual,
as the following case shows.

789 In the wet Nyakyusa valley rain-makers are not concerned only with drought, but also with flood, and, in the years 1935-8,
791 with the rise in the level of the Lake which inundated many gardens.[1] On the Nyakyusa plain the rise was attributed to the
[821] action of a Kisi doctor, Mwatabi, who had first boasted that he could bring up the Lake and then been commissioned by the chief, Mwakalukwa (141), to do so, 'because there was much grass by the Lake and many mosquitoes, and it was dirty there'. He was told to 'take the Lake up a bit, but not too far' and given a sheep. Then, the following season, in April (a month of torrential rain), Mwakalukwa's son Mwakisisile (170, for Mwakalukwa himself had died) gave him a little bull saying,

> ● [578] Send the Lake back, it has come too far. Then the doctor went home thinking to himself, 'Why does he give me such a little bull?' and he met a headman of the neighbouring chief, Mwakabulufu (138), and said, 'Why should I send the Lake back, Mwakisisile has given me a bull only; had he given me a cow, I'd have done so, but now I am angry.' Then Mwakabulufu heard and sent a message to say he would provide a cow, since Mwakalukwa was dead. But the doctor refused: 'No, Mwakalukwa (the son, 170) is still alive, he must give it.' The following September, before the usual end of the dry season, there was rain on the plain. It is the Kisi's rain. Mwakisisile (170) refused to give him anything, he said he was a liar, but the commoners collected 30s. and a goat, and the Kisi performed a ritual just recently, and said: 'The Lake will go back, but my strength will bring the rain; it will rain during the dry season this month.' We laughed very much in Tukuyu to hear such a prophecy, but it is raining!

The following year—after the Lake had risen again—another reason was given. It was said that a rain-maker at Bujo in Kisi country had died, and just before he died he had thrown a rain-stone into the Lake.

(b) MAGIC OF FERTILITY

789 We did not learn very much about 'sprinkling the homesteads';

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[1] There is a periodic rise and fall in the level of the Lake. In 1937 the Lake steamer was anchoring in what had been the road-way of the District Commissioner's house at Karonga.

illness to neglect of his duty to the Kings. All the time we were 793
in BuNyakyusa he was ailing—possibly he suffered from tuber- 755
culosis—and one wrongdoing after another was suggested as the [757]
cause of his illness.

His case is intelligible only in terms of the conception of 'the
breath of men', that is, a power akin to witchcraft thought to be [754]
legitimately exercised by village headmen and others to punish
wrongdoers, but which is referred to by the victims as 'witchcraft'.
This has been discussed at length elsewhere.[1]

On 2nd July 1955, Kasitile had left his own house and was 793
living with a friend in a neighbouring village. His doctor, Mwa- 754
kyonde, said that he was being 'throttled by the witches' and had
invited him to come and recollect himself (*akasipelaleye*) in the
tranquillity of a village of another chiefdom in which there were
many people with spiritual power (*abamanga*) so that 'the witches'
could not get at him. This is a common precaution in case of
illness, for witches are thought not to have power ordinarily
outside their own village and never beyond the chiefdom.[2]

The cause of the illness was explained as follows: Kasitile had [578]
quarrelled with Kisangota, the commoner priest, and others of the
principal men of the country, because he had found them drinking [753]
the sacred beer (*abasikana*), brewed after the millet harvest (*vide
supra*, pp. 84-5) without telling him, or sending him the pot
which was his due. They invited him to drink, but he refused and
they each sent him 1s. to beg pardon. Kasitile bought beer with
one of the shillings and called the senior commoner priest,
Ngulyo, and his fellows to drink saying, 'I was angry, friends, you
"overstepped" me' (i.e. they had ignored his rights). He himself [689]
should have brewed when he confessed his anger, and slaughtered
a calf or prepared food for them as well, but he had bought only
one shilling's worth of beer and provided nothing himself. Then,
when they had drunk, Kasitile fell ill. Hence it was said that the
commoner priests were angry and 'ate' (i.e. bewitched) him.
Kasitile's own comment was: 'The fault lies with the young
priests (Ngulyo, a young man, had inherited his father's position),
they are useless as priests . . . I was not told of that ritual beer, yet
the medicine comes from me, from this home where I keep it.
They should have come to me to get it and put it with the millet
in the holy pot. They drank the beer without medicine. It is they [731]
who have brought cold and hunger on the country. I think the [769]

[1] Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 91-101, 263-9.

[2] op. cit., pp. 100-3.

Kasitile: Yes indeed.
Sangu: Now your body is sick, you are coughing. 787
Kasitile: Yes indeed, I am ill, and I am coughing a great deal. 791
Sangu: Yes, it is that quarrel down there. You came with the cough from the plain. 753
Kasitile: Yes, I came with it.
Sangu: You are a priest, you are a senior priest. (He knew this himself!)
Kasitile: Yes indeed.
Sangu: But the cough comes from the quarrel in the plain. If you were not a priest you would have died.
Kasitile: Indeed, we quarrelled over land, over the boundaries, on the plain. I hoed someone else's land—the land of a commoner there. [578]
Sangu: They placed something to injure you.

Kasitile paused in his narrative and we asked how the 'something' operated.

Kasitile: In dreams, by means of their witchcraft. [754]

The Sangu told me: 'It is this which causes you to cough continually, but there is something else also, you did not move to the plain from here without trouble.'

Kasitile: No, I moved with an accusation against me. [775]
Sangu: Yes indeed, you did wrong and now your fathers are very angry. [776]
Kasitile: Yes, I cut a tree.
Sangu: Mother! You cut a tree? The fathers and Kyala are brooding over you, Kyala is angry and broods over you. Pray, pray very much. It is you who are throttling the cattle of the country.

We expressed surprise and Kasitile continued: 'Yes, indeed. The Sangu said: "It is your wrongdoing (in cutting the tree) which is causing the cows to abort. I will clear out the thing which came with you from the plain. Bring it tomorrow." He's a great doctor, Mwaipaja.' [688]

The astonishing thing was that Kasitile, a man of considerable intelligence and inclined to query the truth of the revelations of some oracles, was so much impressed by the fact that the foreign doctor (staying in the country) knew that he was a priest and had sojourned in the plain, though to anyone knowing KiNyakyusa well his connexion with the plain was apparent in his speech, and his bearing indicated him as a personage.

Talking of the divination three days later, Kasitile told us the Sangu doctor had said: 'You have done wrong at home. This Kyala (pointing to the little pot into which he was looking) knows that Lwembe and the Kings and your father are angry, your father is very important, he works with Kyala, he is with him.' 755

As a treatment for the cough the doctor put various ingredients with 791

(their witchcraft); to each other they say: 'It is your father.' Because 658
if they confess to a fellow commoner saying, 'It is we', he says, 'You 775
are "eating" me, drink the ordeal'. The witch is driven out. But to us 774
they admit saying, 'It was we who were angry.' They do not fear us. 826
Commoners are the seniors in the country; they arrived first. 554

It will be remembered that the commoners are spoken of as 'black people' (abatitu) and that the first chiefs were 'pale' (ndu… reading continues) but these words also have moral implications. 'It is said that a person "has a black heart" or "has black blood", or "is black in his face towards us" when he is thought to be a witch, eating his fellows, or when he is a thief, or a liar, or an adulterer, or dirty. Even though his body is light coloured (mwelu) the word "black" (utitu) is used of him metaphorically.' And mwelu implies innocent, pure, as well as light in colour. The comparable symbolism of 'nigger' and 'white man' is all too familiar in Johannesburg or Charleston.

That Kasitile himself was much afraid of the commoner chiefs [152]
and was relieved by the 'speaking out' was clear, and the people [578]
of the country as a whole were glad that the ritual had been
celebrated, for they expected an increase in fertility. Some days
later Mwakyonde (148), came in and said, laughing, but half 793
serious: 'Congratulations, Mwaipaja (G.W.). You have celebrated 776
the ritual, we rejoice greatly, you give us fertility of the soil, you 183
are a great priest.'

In some moods Kasitile was inclined to become a Christian, but
he felt an obligation to the country as priest, and believed too [777]
strongly in the efficacy of the traditional rituals to abandon them. [787]
He said to G.W. one day, over a pot of beer: 'If it were not for the ritual I would get you to speak to the Europeans of the mission, and I would go with my wife Jane, and be baptized. If my son was old enough and had agreed to carry on the ritual I would do it; perhaps I will when I am old. . . . It is good to have one's heart washed clean, we are dirty inside. The Christians say to us: "You with your four wives each, you are all dirty, you love one and squabble with the rest." Well, it is so with me, I love Jane only; I would like to go and be baptized with her. But I fear for the ritual, I fear hunger, the hunger of the people. For I am the food of the country, I am the maker of food.'

We left Selya shortly after this and were not able to observe the effect of the ritual on political relationships in Selya. Kasitile lived another seventeen years, duly performing his functions, and in 1954 he was succeeded by his brother's son, James.

(b) MEDICINES AND MORALITY

Doctors classify most of their medicines in terms of the supposed mystical causes of disease, and the determining factor in diagnosis is what quarrels have occurred in the patient's circle of kinsmen and friends, or what wrongdoing he has on his conscience. The medicines mentioned to us by various doctors were for treatment of sickness caused by 'the breath of men', by sorcery, by vengeance magic, by the protective medicine put on wives, by the anger of the shades or living senior relatives, by incest, by spearing or binding with ropes,[1] or abnormal birth. Only a few of the medicines listed were for the treatment of observable symptoms such as fever, too frequent periods, or swelling after snake-bite, rather than the supposed mystical cause. 776 753

The emphasis on discovering the mystical cause and counteracting it was shown very clearly when Godfrey Wilson accompanied Mwakyonde, the doctor, to the home of a patient, a young man so weak that he could not lift a limb. Mwakyonde spent two minutes examining him, and provided leaves with which he was poulticed, and a medicine which was rubbed into cuts made all over his body, but the greater part of the day was devoted to discussing the quarrel between kinsmen, from which his illness was thought to have arisen, to persuading the kinsmen to 'speak out', and to preparing and administering a medicine which would cause the death of any one of them who was working sorcery against another. 753 578 ● [757]

Medicine for the treatment of a disease is held to be ineffective—at the best a temporary palliative—unless the underlying cause is discovered and dealt with. For example, doctors spoke of possessing a medicine against [illegible], the disease caused by a kinsman to whom a debt in cattle is due, but it is not effective alone. 'The wrongdoer drinks medicine and pays his kinsman. He must pay, for though the medicine may cure him temporarily the disease will come again if he does not pay his debt.'

The ultimate cause of disease is believed to be friction in social relationships—a breach in moral law—and so the study of medicines takes us directly to problems of morality. There is a deep-rooted conviction that medicines will not be effective if there is quarrelling in the family which uses them. This applies not [illegible] only to medicines used in sickness, but also to those for protection

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[1] op. cit., pp. 17-9.

753 578 and achievement. An account of the treatment of a field for protection against wild pig emphasizes this.

If people wish to protect a crop from wild pig they go to a doctor to ask for medicine. 789 When he gives it to them he tells them that there must be no quarrelling in the home after they have barricaded the 241 field. Four women go to the field with the husband of the one who [669] cultivates it. They go after sunset. One women is shaved; her head is a symbol of the garden devastated by pig. A second woman, who keeps [592] her hair, has a head-pad on her head and carries bananas with medicine. She enters the field and eats the bananas. The husband climbs a hill at a little distance, and two of the women go into the long grass close to the field. The bald pate twists a head-pad and the one with hair smears it with medicine and as they do so they look towards their [831] husband and abuse him saying, 'You lay with your mother', and he swears at them saying, 'The leather aprons of your fathers' . . . and many other insults. Then the women walk round the edge of the field, sprinkling medicines, and they go out the way they came in. The circular pad is a symbol of the barricade placed round the field. When [262] they return home they do not eat but go to sleep hungry (though the clever ones eat beforehand). If they quarrel, the pig finishes the food. It is as if quarrelling destroyed the fierceness, the power, of the protective medicine; you must put aside all quarrelling that the medicine may be powerful. If the pigs come it is as if there were a quarrel, so the women and her husband quarrel in the field mimicking the pig. The husband on the hill is like the pig approaching the field, his wives in the long grass also represent pigs. . . . The husband and his wives quarrel only in the field. If, when the maize is ripe, the husband beats one of his wives for any cause she does not go to pick the maize herself, a friend picks it for her. If she goes in her anger she finds the maize finished, nothing but earth is left.

779 649 Here the link between medicines and morality is made plain. Quarrelling weakens medicines of all sorts and renders them ineffective. But a mimic quarrel between husband and wives in the fields renders the medicine effective. It represents the battle between the pig and the medicines. There is a suggestion elsewhere (pp. 69, 113) that pigs are *sent* by the shades when kinsmen [778] or neighbours quarrel, but in the account just quoted it is implied that quarrelling in the home directly injures the medicine.

In themselves, many medicines are neutral. They may be 778 put to good or evil ends, but because they are mysterious and 754 powerful, they are feared, in the same sort of way as atomic 789 energy is feared in contemporary society. Men use medicines themselves 'for purely peaceful purposes', but they are shocked at the prospect of their enemies using them. The notion that medicines 278 are a weapon which may be used rightly or wrongly is very 754 clearly brought out in the attitude towards 'making' animals. If a 789 private individual 'makes' lion, or leopard, or crocodile which kill men that is sorcery—there is no question about it—and we heard of at least one man who had been driven from his home [689] because he was reputed to have made leopards which killed children and cattle,[1] but when Mwakyonde 'made' lions which drove off pig and did not attack men, that was a public service (*vide* p. 69). And when one chief uses lions in his conflict with [726] another the action is felt to be comparable with war, rather than murder. In February 1937, four lions were hunting in a piece of bush country near the salt lick, which two chiefs claimed. 578 Mwansumbwe, a chief from the hills, had sent some of his men to 754 clear fields in the bush, but Mwakagile (50, or his heir), the neighbouring 789 chief, objected saying, 'This is my land.' There was a long case and finally the District Officer gave judgement in favour [696] of Mwakagile and refused Mwansumbwe any compensation for his work in clearing the bush. 'You got a crop for your labour,' he said. Mwansumbwe was incensed by the judgement and grew even more angry when his men elected to remain on the land they had cleared and became men of Mwakagile. So, everyone said, Mwansumbwe had sought medicines and created these lions. They killed seven cattle in a few days, attacking even by daylight. 'Yes,' we were told, 'there are always lion in the bush, but they do not ordinarily kill cattle as they have done now.'

Another chief who tried the same sort of thing was not so successful. 'Some time ago the chief Mwakila made elephants, he turned his wives into elephants and they ate the bananas of Malapula, but Malapula said, "Let's try", and he created much rain which poured down on to the elephants and those wives died. Then Mwakila was defeated. How about you Europeans? Have you this custom? Do you turn a wife into an animal?'

'No!'

'We have it, if I choose I give my wife *isigila* and she becomes a lion which roars, it roars and eats people.'[2]

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[1] *cf.* Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, p. 124.

[2] This, and the tale of a young man fleeing from justice who obtained a medicine to turn himself into a lion, were the only accounts of lycanthropy we heard—usually the medicines themselves (such as those of a chief) turn into animals, or the young of ordinary lion, leopard, or crocodile 'smell the medicines' and become attached to the 'owner' who feeds and commands them.

If a man has quarrelled with a kinsman, or is conscious of 751
having bitter enemies, or hears that someone with whom he has [578]
had a dispute has 'gone to the doctors', he is likely to go to a horn
doctor for protective medicine, even though he is perfectly well.

'The horn' is believed to discover and punish the guilty whether 789
they are known to the injured or not, but if someone uses it with- 751
out just cause the medicine will recoil on himself. The seven cases 754
of using the horn reported to us[1] were all used in revenge: two for
theft, two for seduction, and three for withholding cattle due. And
it is revenge that was emphasized in one account of the treatment:

> If someone has stolen my cow I go to a doctor and pay him a bull. [685]
> Then he prepares the medicine (the horn) and stands facing it, with
> a spear over his shoulder, pointing towards it, and he speaks aloud
> saying: 'So-and-so, if you have not taken the cow you will recover, if
> you have eaten it you will die.' Then the breath (*indojo*) goes to the
> man named and if he has really stolen the cow he dies. . . .

But another informant, listing the contents of a 'horn', stressed the [278]
protective element. It contains 'the bile of a crocodile, the skin of
a python, and *ingifwila* medicine (*vide* p. 58) which has been used
to kill men' . . .

> If a witch comes to throttle and kill you then the bile of the crocodile throttles and strikes him [the witch], and the *ingifwila* does the same, it is to kill the witches, it spears those who come to throttle you. The skin of the python means that if people come to throttle you they find you have changed yourself into a python.

Another type of vengeance magic, *ilyepe*, is thought to work only between blood relatives.

> If your father-in-law is angry it is your children he kills, not yourself. [578]
> If the diviner says the disease comes from the woman's side of the
> family the protective medicine is given only to her, not to the man; if
> from his side only he is protected, not the wife. The relative who is
> angry drinks a medicine; he puts a barbed spear into the fire and when
> it is red hot he slashes a banana sucker with it and speaks the name,
> then the kinsman who is mentioned dies.

A third type is that used to secure property (*ulusinga*) and [685]
snare thieves or adulterers; for the exclusive rights of a husband [684]
over his wife are treated as property rights. Often a medicated
stick is placed in a field to ward off thieves, and some husbands

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[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 214-56.

773 among some other peoples with a corresponding ritual), but the
young men seize cattle belonging to the older generation, thus
asserting their authority. The opposition of generations is taken
for granted and given expression in constitutional form: the ritual
is a celebration not of 'rebellion' but of growth. For all their
reluctance to hand over power the fathers 'rejoice and are glad
because their sons have grown up'. Change in the structure of
society after the revolution of the heroic age, is not celebrated,
and is scarcely admitted, but the process of growth, of death and
procreation, is expressed in every ritual. Indeed, the ritual cycle is
like a fugue with the theme of death and rebirth constantly
recurring.

771 The pagan universe is just and orderly. There is a nemesis
772 attached to spilling blood or binding a man with ropes. The anger
of men,[1] or of the shades who are roused by men, is what brings
812 most misfortune, and often, the Nyakyusa think, such anger is
justified. Even medicines may be selective, injuring only the
guilty. The good man who celebrates the proper rituals, fulfils his
kinship obligations, and keeps on good terms with his neighbours,
is protected, while the evil-doer falls ill. But some evil men,
witches and sorcerers, attack the innocent out of jealousy and
spite. Evil to the Nyakyusa, lies primarily within men: it is 'anger
in the heart' which materializes as pythons that throttle others.
● [578] Because they are aware of angry impulses in themselves the
Nyakyusa find it difficult to believe that any society without
witchcraft can exist; to say that there is no abalosi is like suggesting
that there is no ill will or anger in a community. And since anger
brings misfortune there is an obligation on those whose anger
might have caused sickness or ill luck to express goodwill by
spitting or blowing out water, and saying, 'May the patient
recover' or 'I am without anger'. Among commoners the man
required to show goodwill is usually a senior relative, rather than a
suspected witch (as among the Azande). But a neighbour or
[774] friend who might be a witch or sorcerer should also express
goodwill when he visits the sick, and fellow hunters who have ill
luck may stop to declare their goodwill to one another, as we have
seen. If a chief or priest-chief is sick the village headmen and priests
must wish him well and confess any anger they have felt towards
[783] him. The blowing out of water is a symbol of confession, 'bringing

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[1] For a full account of the belief in witchcraft and the 'breath of men', cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 91-121, 198-262.

out all the anger that is within', 'admitting that I have done wrong', begging pardon ([illegible]) and also a symbol of confession and so of driving off the shades (*vide supra*, pp. 104, 108-110; 139). 771 772 [12 Good health depends upon good social relationships, and of one who is ailing it is commonly said: 'It seems as if they (unspecified) had hated her.' [783] [767] Further, the proper working of the natural order is held to depend upon the proper working of the social order. Drought, or 'cold', or pestilence falls on a chiefdom if there is quarrelling between chief and priests, and the anger of the Lwembe with his 'sons' will shrivel the crops of Selya. The heroes, the shades, many of the men of power (abamanga), and many medicines help to maintain an orderly universe; only the witches and sorcerers work against it. In short, order and right living are an integral part of Nyakyusa religion as they are of Christianity.

The ultimate good is the power of fertility, of generation, which lies in the heroes and shades; the punishment for evil-doing is ill-health of body or mind and sterility. [681] [753] [775] And towards the heroes and shades, who are both life-givers and avengers, the attitude of men is clearly ambivalent: the shades are driven away—'let them warm themselves over there in the long grass', men say when they throw out the ashes (*vide supra*, pp. 109-11) but they bring them home again to 'warm themselves by the hearth'.

In analysing the rituals of the Nyakyusa, I have been driven to the conclusion that they are, in fact, dogged by a sense of guilt,[1] for this is the only hypothesis on which the linking of misfortune and sin, the preoccupation with 'filth', and the recurring acts of purification can be explained. 181 771 783 578 One of the sources of this sense of guilt is, I suggest, awareness of anger within, for it is believed that such anger injures others. An act of confession is essential to many rituals, and what must be confessed are anger, hard thoughts, ill will against others. The anger is acknowledged to come primarily from men—it is the angry parent who rouses the shades to action by muttering over the fire—but the guilt, the filth, is projected on to the shade or the hero. It is when they 'brood on' men that men are contaminated. A shade or a man that is *mgolofu*—good, righteous—is one without a grudge, without anger against anyone, free of witchcraft, and free of sex transgression—'there is no accusation against him'.

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[1] I doubted this earlier, cf. 'Nyakyusa Ritual and Symbolism', *American Anthropologist*, v. 56 (1954), pp. 237-8.

768 swept through BuNyakyusa in the early 1930's; perhaps other
783 similar movements preceded it—we do not know. What is clear
[777] is that traditionally there was continuous public pressure to
[185] overcome hatred within the village and the kinship group; to rid
oneself of it by confession and an expression of goodwill. In pagan
● [778] thought Utopia is a society without witches or sorcerers and, though it was never achieved, everyone is convinced that formerly these evil-doers were fewer than now, because they were restrained by law, whereas 'witches' now go scot-free.

183 The interests of the Nyakyusa are personal and practical. Health, fertility, and amity between kinsmen and neighbours are what they seek. It is with rain and drought, with the rise of
773 the Lake or the striking of lightning which destroys property; with stock, crops, and the wild animals which prey upon them that the myths are concerned. We could trace no tales of the sun, moon, and stars, and no rituals are directed to them. Reference is made to volcanic disturbance in the myths of the heroes—'the ground rumbled' when Nkekete and Kyala walked, and there are stories of small lakes disappearing and reappearing elsewhere—but the concern shown is surprisingly little if an eruption indeed destroyed villages last century as Mr. Harkin's single informant suggests (*vide supra*, p. 18).

787 Reality is thought to be revealed to men in dreams, by prophets
who 'go down thinking like the roots of a tree' to the world of the
791 shades, and by oracles. What men seek to know are the causes of misfortune—public and private—and the identity of witches. Occasionally, it is said, a prophet has looked into the future and foretold drought, or flood, or the coming of Europeans—'white things on the Lake'—against whom it would be foolish to fight, but for the most part they are concerned with the misfortunes
[183] that exist, and urging men to pray in the groves. The contemplative is not honoured in Nyakyusa tradition; the man of spiritual power is a detective—a discoverer of evil-doers—or an administrator whose awfulness adds to his authority.

183 Men are preoccupied with their relationships to other living
men—their kinsmen, neighbours, and fellow office-holders—
771 and with their dead fathers. They are not concerned with their relationship to Kyala. The rituals celebrated by kinsmen are directed to the shades not to any supreme God, and it is quarrelling between kinsmen that angers the shades and makes the celebration of certain rituals necessary. The communal rituals are

797 Government service for a number of years. Most of the members of the Church, and all the office-bearers, were Henga, some of 795 them living, like Nyasuru himself, in the Kyungu's country, but there were also a few Ngonde and Nyakyusa.

Silwani Ngemela, the leader of 'The Last Church of God and His Christ', was also an ex-teacher and elder of the Church of Scotland Mission. He was of Ngonde lineage, the son of a minor chief, and had been a member of the Watch Tower, but had broken away from it and formed his own Church in 1925—retaining the practice of baptism by immersion 'in Jordan' which he had learnt from the Watch Tower. He, too, had been closely connected with a man, Jordan Msumba, who had worked in South Africa; indeed some said that Msumba, who had been for many years in Cape Town, was the real founder of the Church. Most of Ngemela's members were Nyakyusa or Ngonde.

Nyasuru and Ngemela each emphasized the independence of his Church from any other and each was somewhat jealous of his position as a leader. As Ngemela put it, 'The Governor corresponds with me alone'. In his Church all monies go direct to him, and [578] there had already been a quarrel with one 'pastor' who had split off because he said that the Church funds should be lodged in the Boma and used to build a school. The BaNgemela had no schools and none of their pastors was paid. Nyasuru made a point of the fact that his deacons collected the Church funds and banked them in the name of the Church, and the African National Church did in fact run several schools (one of them within the Ngonde area) and pay the teachers.

Though the membership of the 'independent' African Churches was not very large (in the Nyakyusa-Ngonde area a total membership of 8,577 was claimed in 1938, but some of these probably lived outside this area), yet these Churches are symptomatic of a movement that has been important elsewhere. Nearly a fifth of the Africans who are professing Christians in the Union of South Africa belong to 'independent' Churches,[1] and a substantial number in Kenya. These Churches are a structural expression of the conflict between European and African, and of the desire of Africans to be independent leaders, but yet recognized as

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[1] *Official Year Book of the Union of South Africa, 1950–3*, pp. 231, 497. But the proportion had declined from 16·5 per cent to 9·6 per cent of the total Bantu population between 1911 and 1946. *Official Summary of the Report of the Commission for the Socio-Economic Development of the Bantu Areas within the Union of South Africa* (U.G. 61/1955), p. 21.

Yes, indeed, they boast, they say threateningly (she put her arms 797x
akimbo, and imitated a menacing voice) 'Don't speak to me like that!' 795x

All through this discussion Y was excited and spoke with 754
vehemence. Next day she came in looking worried and said:

About that choking of which I was telling you, what do you think it is when you wake up with pains like that? I'll tell you how it was. I went to see my sister, and found her very ill. She had had a miscarriage and her in-laws had not looked after her properly; they had not sent her to hospital, and when she was lying ill her mother-in-law even refused to come and cook for her. And so I was very, very angry with them. And that night I woke up feeling as if someone were stamping on my head, and I heard the knocking on the door and the footsteps I told you about. What do you make of such things when you dream someone strikes you or is throttling you?

The conception that misfortune is the result of sin, which [688]
dominates pagan thought, is reinterpreted in terms of the changing conception of God and the changing social structure. We found that many Christians believed that misfortune had been brought on certain wrong-doers by the 'curse' (*ikigune*) of a priest or elder, [578]
or the anger of their Christian neighbours. A missionary or elder rebuking a man was repeatedly thought to have 'cursed' him,[1] so that he lost his job, or fell ill, or was eaten by a crocodile, and in one case a young couple who had not had a child were said to have been cursed by their Christian neighbours because the young man had provided no feast at his wedding. The Christians who believe in such a 'curse' explain that the power comes from God who 'hears people who murmur'—a direct parallel to the pagan belief in the power of senior relatives and neighbours to bring misfortune on wrong-doers—and it is the *words uttered*—the rebuke of one in authority or the murmuring of neighbours—which are held to be dangerous.

How the reproving words of a missionary may be interpreted as a curse is shown in the following case.

The wife of Z was a thief. She stole things from the loft of her mother-in-law's hut. She herself began to say: 'I am tired of my husband', and she began making love to other men. When her husband asked her to do anything she refused. She complained to neighbours, saying: 'My husband is a hard man. He watches me when I am preparing food to

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[1] Thirteen cases of this type are recorded in *Good Company*, p. 109. cf. Monica Hunter, 'An African Christian Morality', *Africa*, x (1937), pp. 265-9.

[177] conscious. This disintegration of a former coherence, and a [769] decreasing awareness of the meaning of symbols used, are perhaps [786] characteristic of changing societies in Africa.

Despite the growth of the Christian Church, the great demand for schools, and the dropping of the old rituals directed to family [759] shades and the heroes, belief in the power of medicines flourishes. [778] Probably most deaths and misfortunes are still attributed to an enemy using either witchcraft or sorcery. The traditional belief in witchcraft is rejected by educated people, but belief in the power of medicines is general. Autopsies still take place and occasionally the poison ordeal is administered in secrecy; one case was mentioned which occurred in 1942. As we have seen, medicines have always been regarded as a potential instrument of individual competition. They are used in the rituals of kinship to ensure health, fertility, and good manners and morals; in the ritual of chieftainship to buttress authority, and in 'sprinkling the homesteads' to fertilize the fields; but also by individuals to steal the fertility of their neighbours' fields and to grow rich at the expense of their neighbours, and it is their use as an instrument of individual aggrandizement that is most talked of today. There were many reports of their use by rivals to office as chiefs, and the floods of 1955, which washed away the Mbaka bridge and caused a serious landslide on that river, were interpreted as incidents in a [578] prolonged fight between chiefs who were rivals for the position of paramount. The deaths of the heir of one of them in 1953, and of the other chief himself in 1956, were also attributed to their duel with medicines.

Along with the political changes there has been a development 797 of the Churches, more particularly of the Moravian Church, 795 which is now largely self-supporting, with growing congregations served by African ministers.[1] Until 1938 the two main Protestant 177 missions in Nyakyusa valley, the Moravian and Lutheran, were staffed by Germans and their funds came mainly from Germany. The war meant the withdrawal of the missionaries and the cutting off of funds. After a lapse of three years one Moravian missionary, and later one Lutheran, came to take charge of the missions and they were reinforced by other missionaries after the end of the war, but the whole policy in both missions is to build up self-supporting churches staffed by African pastors.

The work of the White Fathers mission was not interrupted by

[1] Change in Ngonde is not discussed.

(e.g. for fear of witchcraft) and take up the vacant holding. Nevertheless in 428 general the holding was allowed to lapse and it could be re-allocated by the 423 village headman if need arose; or the elderly widows might be allowed to continue to reside and cultivate as long as they wished.

Once land began to become scarce and valuable this loose system could 423 no longer continue. Junior brothers and half-brothers were no longer content [178] to permit the chief heir to take the whole of the deceased's holding to do with it as he wished, and a systematised division had to be adopted. At first, naturally enough, land was gradually brought under the same system which [428] controlled the inheritance of other property, but this proved inadequate – inadequate not only in itself as being, perhaps, too complicated and conducive of disagreement and quarrelling in so far as land is concerned, but also because that system itself was already beginning to break down under the impact of individualism.

It was felt that because sons assist their father in his homestead and fields and in their turn rely on him for a share in the cash-and-kind profits of peasant farming, therefore they should have priority in the inheritance of their father's property. Their father's brothers, it was said, would in any case already have their own holdings in which likewise their sons have prime interest. Conversely, older Nyakyusa men began to be reluctant to take a brother's land (and other property too) on his death, for fear that, in their turn, control of their own land would descend at their deaths to their brothers' sons rather than to their own sons.

As a result of these attitudes a strong desire arose to modify the customary laws in this matter, and the Rungwe African District Council, with [646] the approval of the Government, has by formal resolution established a new law under which sons may inherit direct from their own fathers.

This law is not universally accepted by the Nyakyusa of the Lake Plains and sons still will sometimes waive their novel rights in favour of the traditional claims of their fathers' brothers. They say that they do not desire to see the break-up of the wider lineage which, in effect, this new law encourages; they are also afraid of the anger and jealousy, and thus of the witch- [754] craft, of their uncles. It appears however that the change is accepted by [578] the large majority of the people, for it follows the trend of modern values and kinship sentiments.

The principal heir is now the eldest son, but in general he has little 423 direct control over the property and land of his half-brothers unless they are still young, in which case he has a moral duty to act as guardian and 428 custodian. Sons inherit that part of the paternal holding which had been allocated to their mother by their father in his lifetime, plus any other pieces he might have given to any of them direct as individuals. Each group of full-brothers determines the way in which it divides up its own inheritance. [593] The eldest brother of such a house has a definite obligation to see that his juniors obtain shares of the land in so far as its extent and their number will allow. On the whole it is expected by Nyakyusa that the eldest brother will secure the best holding for himself, as befits his new status, but he cannot deny his younger brothers' claims. Disputes in this matter are not uncommon and the local courts have already shown their determination to support the claims of younger brothers.

Very commonly – though it has not yet crystallised as compulsory [183] social behaviour – a father will grant a portion of his holding to his son on the latter's marriage, or as soon after as the son decides to give up labour [178] migration and settle down. It is thought that a married man should be independent economically and that he should be able to maintain his own [593] household; it is realised that there is most likely to be friction in the relations between father and son, especially in this society where it is traditionally

423 428 [593] believed that parents and children should live apart.[1] In the same way, and for similar reasons, an elder brother tries to make provision for his juniors when the latter marries if their father is already dead. The practice of the father is not a legally required one, although it is nowadays increasingly common and sons have begun to expect it; the practice of an elder brother is now legally required in the matter of land and probably always has been in the matter of cattle.

[421] The difficulties are obvious when a man dies and leaves several sons but only a small-sized holding. To date no clear ruling has emerged and unfortunately the African District Council did not deal specifically with such details when introducing the new law. How much land an eldest brother can reasonably retain for himself is perhaps not determinable in practice except in specific relation to the nature, locality and fertility of the holding in question, the plots already held by the man himself, the needs and number of the younger brothers and any holdings they may have, and the location of the villages in which they severally live. [598] There is also plenty of scope for disagreement between half-brothers over portions of the paternal holding which had been retained by the father himself for his own use; over portions allocated to a wife who has borne no sons or whose sons have died, and over permanent trees. The situation is still fluid and there has not yet been time enough for a common and generally acceptable solution to be established. Consequently each group of sons tries to solve its own particular problems in this matter as best it can, torn between old values and new attitudes and needs.

593 428 Relations between both full-brothers and half-brothers tend often to be severely tried at times of inheritance. It is not primarily, I think, a case of brothers' greed for valued land tending to overcome bonds of fraternity and co-operation; but it is rather that a father's arable holding is often not able to provide adequate amounts of arable land for each of his sons, and yet they find the very greatest difficulty in obtaining land elsewhere. [183] Already the traditional kin-group comprising the sons and grandsons of a group of full-brothers had begun to break down even before land shortage became serious. Now the group of full-brothers itself tends to be dispersed as men obtain land where they can and it is endangered by dissensions over land rights and land division. Increasingly, it seems, a Nyakyusa man is becoming detached from his brothers and he tends to establish an independent family unit comprising his immediate family alone – that is, himself with his wives and children. We cannot attribute the whole cause of this modern trend to land shortage and economic difficulties, of course, for involved also are new ideas of individualism and of personal effort and reward, and the decreasing need for the consistent support of brothers in social, economic and ritual activities.

596 423 428 Younger brothers may, and sometimes do in fact, agree that the paternal holding is already too small for further sub-division, or that the small parts which can be made available to them are scarcely worth having – especially if they live some distance away. On the other hand, the eldest brother may already have obtained a holding in his own village and is therefore willing to make only a small claim or none at all in the interests of his juniors, and he may then divide the inheritance amongst them alone. Usually, so acute is the dearth of land, the holding is divided between two or more brothers. [311] It is split into small plots so that each brother has a share of paddy, food-crop and banana land, and these are commonly a half acre or even less in size nowadays. As already mentioned, by a kind of modern [694] equity the local African courts generally favour the claims of the younger

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[1] See Wilson, M., 1951, p. 159 and passim. "The overt purpose [of age-villages] is the separation of sons and mothers, of fathers-in-law and daughters-in-law." (ibid p. 162).

brothers, and this is compelling the increasing and continued fragmentation of holdings at time of inheritance. Even so, if there are several brothers (i.e., sons of the deceased) the youngest among them may still be unable to obtain a plot, or at least not one of an economically viable size, and they are then compelled to try to gain admittance to some other village as newcomers, there to be allocated land. 578 423 423 [626]

The shortage of land is, therefore, not only making inheritance very considerably more important, but it is assisting in the establishment of new kinship attitudes and a redefining of fraternal relations. The position is most confused at the moment as the old system continues to exist alongside the new, sometimes more or less successfully, but often in intractable opposition. At the present time the observer can only mention general tendencies, for it is impossible as yet to foresee what the eventual result will be, and there are, in any case, many other factors involved besides those of the inheritance of scarce land. [178]

In so far as we are primarily concerned with land problems in this essay, the basic factors are that land is newly scarce, that there is virtually no alternative activity in the country to the arable use of the land, and that therefore each son must try to obtain a share in the often inadequate holding of his father. I suggest that no form of inheritance can deal with such a situation satisfactorily – at least it is highly doubtful if any has yet emerged in an area of land shortage in Eastern Africa – and thus there are bound to be severe difficulties and a deterioration of inter-personal relations between near kinsmen who are most in competition. The new inheritance law of the Nyakyusa has narrowed the range of potential conflict from the patrilineal descendants of a grandfather to the sons of a single father; but if it has obviated possible hostility between the generations and between paternal cousins, it has also removed much of the common interest and mutual interdependence between them. [311] [578]

The Right to Land, and the Authority of the Village Headman

Although the traditional principle still exists that every villager has a right to arable land within the village boundaries, yet it is no longer possible to carry it out in practice. Every village headman, in my experience, attempts to ensure that each of his men has land, but he cannot always succeed, and most especially he cannot provide every one with as much land as he would like, because of sheer spatial limitation. 622 311 423

Nowhere any longer does the old principle now hold that an established villager may, without permission or notification, take vacant land into cultivation as part of his holding. When land becomes vacant it must now revert immediately to the village as a group, that is to the common pool from which the headman as village authority makes allocations. There are so many and such varied demands for land nowadays that no man acting on his own can presume to take up vacant land, and only the headman may decide allocation. No person can now obtain land, whether he be an established villager or not, unless he is allocated it by the headman – or, in the many large villages typical of the Lake Plains, by the headman's assistant, *ugwaliyimo*, who is delegated authority in a section of the village. [624]

Land becomes vacant when a man shifts to another village, when a man dies and leaves no active heir who desires to take up the deceased's holding, or (but seldom today) when a man gives up part of his holding due to his inability to use the whole of it. In all these cases the land is immediately re-allocated by the headman, probably not as a single unit any longer, as best he can among a crowd of land-hungry villagers – established men seeking extra land to meet the needs of growing families or for increasing cash-crop

number of separate plots per holding was less than where land was scarcer; 311
at the same time the average size of separate plots was smaller in those more 423
land-hungry villages. The reader may refer to Table III (page 15) for some illustrative figures. Though differences are not yet very great, nevertheless there seems to be a fairly clear correlation between the average size of villagers' holdings on the one hand, and on the other the number and size of separate plots, and this is entirely borne out by my general information obtained in villages where actual measurements were not made. The inescapable conclusion must be that increasing scarcity of land in the Lake Plains leads to increasing fragmentation and dispersion of holdings; further, the present land situation and land tenure system can only lead to a continuation of this trend.

To emphasise the actual situation in 1955, let me reiterate the results of my own village surveys in the very high density region. In a village in Karumo's chiefdom only a quarter of the younger men had paddy land of their own, holdings averaging about three-quarters of an acre; in a village in Mwakipesile's chiefdom, only 17 per cent. of the younger men had paddy land and holdings averaged about half an acre (cf. Table VII, page 37). These two examples are taken from the areas of most severe land shortage and are not therefore altogether typical of the whole Lake Plains. Nevertheless, I do not think that they are entirely atypical; more importantly, they indicate the present trend. Within another generation this fragmentation and scatter of holdings may well be the common feature everywhere in the flood plains unless the system of tenure and inheritance is modified. If the increase in population is quickened through improved medical facilities, better diet and housing, and improved conditions generally, then the position will become more acute. Such an increase is only to be expected. The Nyakyusa have [433]
decisively entered a money economy and they have learnt to seek higher standards of living. Only from their fields, by cash-cropping, can they [511]
expect to earn their livings and the demand for better living will not be curtailed – nor, of course, is it desirable that it should be.

There is another aspect of this whole matter which must be considered. It relates to the movement of individuals between villages. Such movement [166]
was, in earlier European days, a crucial factor in the age-village structure, for it was not only exceedingly frequent, but also it tended to undermine the idealised coeval basis of village life. Movement between villages is increasingly difficult now, for a newcomer naturally cannot easily obtain land, nor [954]
as much land as he would desire even at a moderate demand. Nevertheless, the reasons for movement persist, and they will do so whilst the fear of [953]
witchcraft remains and whilst illness and misfortune are attributable to the unfavourable aura of a place. There remains also the tradition of moving so [624]
that a man may escape from bad relations with kinsfolk or neighbours, or from the obloquy resulting from his own disapproved actions. Much social and psychological tension is being created now as a result of the new [152]
difficulty of movement, and so far the Nyakyusa have not evolved alternative [578]
methods.

On the other hand, so deeply engrained is the notion of the prestige [554]
and power which accrues to a village by virtue of the number of its inhabitants, that headmen and villagers alike remain most reluctant to refuse to accept [609]
newcomers, even when it inevitably means that the present inhabitants must meet a further decrease in the average amount of land available per family, [622]
for a newcomer must be allocated a holding if he is to remain. Consequently, if a holding is for any reason left vacant, a headman tends to refuse to re-allocate some or all of it amongst his villagers and thus to augment their holdings; but instead he keeps it in reserve pending the hoped-for arrival of another newcomer. Men desiring to leave their own village try to get

423 all. Field boundaries have lost their earlier fluidity, when a plenty of land did not call for precise demarcation, and the only important changes now result from the land being left vacant or by the internal division of established holdings by inheritance or anticipatory inheritance.

In brief, then, the high premium given to land because of its modern scarcity value, and the enhanced authority of the headman in land affairs act together to preserve the individual's rights. The residual rights of the village, as group-owner of all land within the village boundary, do not affect the land-holder during his continued residence there.

[423] [595] The commonest type of dispute in land matters arises in inheritance, where a younger brother sues his senior in order to obtain or increase his share of the paternal holding (see page 21). That is to say, in general only where established holdings are being broken up does dispute arise and then, of course, only between the sons of the dead man. Disputes between neighbours in a village seldom are grave enough to be brought to court or even before the headman.

[593] There are also many petty, semi-domestic cases which faithfully reflect the frequently poor relations between Nyakyusa husbands and wives in modern times.[1]

TABLE IV

NYAKYUSA LAND DISPUTES: CIVIL CASES, 1954

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	No. of civil cases	*Land cases No.*	*Land cases %*	*Population per land case*	*Density of population*
Lake Plains	1,077	106	9	567	283
N.E. Highlands	963	24	2.5	1,842	199
Central Region	900	13	1.5	4,092	243
N.W. Highlands	1,380	8	0.6	7,300	201

Based on returns of civil cases in local courts of first instance ('B' Courts) for 1954. In 1955 the percentages were almost exactly the same as in 1954.

Several interesting points are suggested by these figures. Firstly, there is the larger proportion of land cases and the much smaller population per case in the Lake Plains, where land shortage is worst in relation to local demand, not only because of the higher density of population as such, but also because of the relatively larger acreages required for paddy cultivation. Secondly, in the Central Region of Nyakyusa country there is also a high density of population, but nevertheless only a few land cases; this may be attributed to the absence of cash-cropping and the absence, therefore, of a keen demand for land. On the other hand, the relatively numerous cases, or small population per case, in the north-eastern Highlands seem to result directly from a particularly densely populated area (Mwakaleli) where coffee cultivation is long established and the demand for land is exceptionally keen. In other words, as far as the figures for 1954 and 1955 show, there is a direct connection between land scarcity and the incidence of land disputes before the local courts (i.e. the more intractable disputes which go beyond the village headmen). General observation supports this conclusion. It may be expected in the future, therefore, that such cases will increase unless administrative action is taken to rationalise the inheritance laws with a view to minimising the area of potential disagreement amongst the sons of a deceased man.

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171 For comparative interest, in so far as they offer some indication, I append here data on other Districts in the Territory where land disputes are common.

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[1] In 1954, 60 per cent. of all civil cases in the lowest courts were marital disputes, including divorce suits, and there was one divorce case for every 24 adult males living in the country in that year.

311 233 Whereas in the Highland and Central regions the large numbers of cattle – in relation, that is, to the available pasture resources – are causing over-grazing and soil erosion, particularly in the hilly areas so often nowadays relegated to pasturage, on the other hand in the flood plains there does not appear, at least to the layman, to have been any serious effects on the land. [341] The natural manuring of the paddy fields in the dry season is advantageous. In the Lake Plains it is the cattle rather than the land which suffer, but so far the Nyakyusa have done virtually nothing to meet the new conditions, other than to complain bitterly and fruitlessly.

The Young Men: Land Shortage and Labour Migration

423 The younger Nyakyusa men find increasing difficulty in obtaining arable land now that there are no longer vacant areas to be taken up, and the older men are no longer prepared to cede their land rights in favour of the younger generation, as they traditionally did. When occasional fields are left vacant, the young men must take their turn with their elders, who themselves are so chronically short of land – and the headmen commonly favour the older villagers with families as against the younger men. This means that in the high-density regions the majority of men under the age of about 30 years have little or no arable land, nor can they hope for it until the deaths of their fathers. In the congested village sites even their banana plots may be smaller than is desirable for the provision of the staple food.

The young man, then, is compelled to remain dependent on his father's [593] and elder brother's holding; indeed, headmen often justify their refusals to [178] allocate plots to young men on the express grounds that the latter must share their elders' fields. Thus the valued independence of the young Nyakyusa is severely restricted and it seems that tensions and difficulties are beginning to arise between fathers and sons, and between brothers, because of this. [578] Sons are blamed for not doing their fair share in the family cultivation; fathers are blamed for giving their sons inadequate shares in crops and crop incomes. It will be remembered that one of the fundamental principles underlying Nyakyusa society and its age-village organisation is the spatial segregation of parents and children (*cf.* page 22). Now they are inevitably being put into competition with one another over inadequate fields in a single holding.

The young men are severely restricted, if not altogether cut off, from the [434] opportunity to cultivate paddy in their own fields and thus to earn their incomes at home, for paddy-growing is the only way of earning a living in the [343] Lake Plains. Yet it is these younger men whose money demand is greatest; to buy clothing, bicycles and other store-goods, and to buy cattle for marriage payments. They are therefore strongly attracted by the ready opportunities for taking up wage-labour abroad, in the mines of the Rhodesias and South Africa where wages are high (see Gulliver, 1957).

With the best will in the world, when, as in the very high-density region, the average holding is little more than an acre and a half – when, that is, the older men themselves desire larger acreages for their own cultivation needs – it is not possible for a father to allow his son to take large shares in his fields. In some cases a father does give outright to his adult sons strips of his holding, but plots so provided are necessarily small. Quite as frequently a father does not consider it possible to break up his holding in his own lifetime, [593] and sons are expected to assist in the common cultivation and to continue merely to be given a share in the family proceeds at harvest. It is not surprising, therefore, that very large numbers of young men from the Lake [167] Plains migrate abroad to work. Only about one man in 20 has not been away at all before the age of about 25 years. Much higher proportions of men and larger numbers absolutely are temporarily absent from the Lake against the wrong-doer. It is supposed that after this procedure sickness or even death may come to that person. Another method consists of laying a bewitched object on the path usually used by the offender, with the same result. Such bewitching is practised, for instance, when a quarrel has broken out between relatives. With the Nyakyusa any quarrelling with kinsmen is considered a very serious crime, as such a conduct is apt, in their estimation, to destroy the highly-valued family harmony. 758 [578 183]

3. Another day a ceremony (*ukwangaga*)[6] to end mourning was held at Katumba. Some time before an older child had died, and now they were gathered to take leave of the dead[7]. 765

At some distance from the hut, on the open space before it, a square represented the grave, in which the blossom of a banana[8] was interred, representing the dead. The mourners knelt at this grave and touched it with their elbows, knees and foreheads[9]. Each of the chief mourners had to do this, according to the belief of the Natives, lest he should fall into madness. [824] [828]

The next act was performed by the unyago[10], the leading person of the ceremony, one in full knowledge of the rites. Immediately before the door of the hut of the mourning parents, the unyago threw the collections of corn, brought by the participants in small baskets in honour of the dead, together into a big basket, and uttered the names of the contributors addressing the dead. The other participants repeated these names.

Then the mourners went into the hut; but, after some moments, they reappeared one by one and each one, as he left the door in a crouching position, was softly struck on his neck by the unyago with a piece of the trunk of a banana plant. It was explained to me that this ceremony would induce new strength to the mourners, who were weakened by the death of their relative. [824]

The portion of the ceremony which followed, consisted in the forming of a line by the mourners between the hut and the grave. The persons now stood straddle-legged on leaves of banana, the unyago at the [481]

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[6] Cf. Wilson, Conventions of Burial, p. 8, n. 4: ukwanyaga.

[7] Wilson has described burials (ifwa, sg.) of adult persons; nevertheless, I think, my description will be of some value.

[8] Cf. my Chaga Notes, Bantu Studies, XV, p. 282.

[9] Cf. *Fülleborn*, p. 338.

[10] Cf. *Mackenzie*, p. 290; pl. banyago, p. 51; Wilson, Introduction, p. 287, unyago (hereditary priests).

After these admonitions, the mats which the girl had manufactured 881
were inspected. During this examination it was told her that a wife 867
should be seen in the possession of as many beautiful mats as possible, 285
made by her for herself and for her husband. Should the girl reveal
such conduct as a wife, *[illegible]* (happiness) would be in her hut.

When the proper ceremony seemed to have come to an end, another 881
discussion followed. The girl had told the [illegible], during the above 578
mentioned admonition, that her parents also sometimes exchanged
angry words. Therefore, a new discussion between the *father* and the
mother arose, in which also the [illegible] was the "speaker", but the
other participants of the ceremony also shared in it, and the discussion
too became at times heated. Still, after about 15 minutes, it suddenly
came to an end, and the matter in dispute was declared settled. With
this the whole ceremony ended.

8. One day I asked the chief for permission to visit his huts. He 622
dwelt in a rectangular hut (*[illegible]*). A very beautiful *ikitara* (bed) was 352
in the main room, composed of many sleeping mats (*[illegible]*, pl. *[illegible]*) and of big round wooden blocks (sections of a tree-trunk), one at [342]
the head and a smaller one at the foot of the bed. Each of the four fine
mats which lay uppermost had a special name. All the mats rested on
sticks of reed laid across beams lying on smaller poles on the floor[39].
These mats were naturally of nearly the same height as the wooden
block which formed the head part of the *ikitara*. In some other old-fashioned and better houses in Nyakyusa villages, similar beds were
to be seen, but generally the bedsteads are much more simple.

One of the most important permissions granted me by the chief was 342
to enter the "store room", connected with his main room by a door. 353
The objects to be seen here were the same as those to be found in other 622
huts or store-rooms, e. g. the big *[illegible]* (baskets) for storing grain, up [251]
to four feet high, smeared over with cow-dung and clay, and smaller [237]
baskets for different purposes. In one corner hung different kinds of
dancing fans (*[illegible]*, sg.) made of hairs from the tails of bulls, with
fine handles of horn. In the dark opposite corner of the same wall
there seemed to hang a similar object, but it was wrapped in banana
bast. This was the real sign of the chief's dignity, the symbol of his [778]
authority and power, named *[illegible]*. A long discussion was needed
to induce the chief to unveil it. Only by constantly consulting by glancing the present *[illegible]* the chief slowly unveiled it. He told us that [775]

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[39] Cf. *Fülleborn*, p. 381.

6 [illegible] I, 1